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APPLICANT(S): Masakazu Koyanagi, et al.

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INVENTION: CONTROLLER FOR PHOTOGRAPHING APPARATUS AND
PHOTOGRAPHING SYSTEM

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

CERTIFIED TRANSLATION

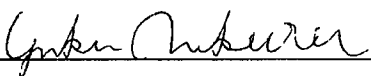
Sir:

Yuka NAKAMURA residing at c/o SUGIURA PATENT OFFICE,
2nd Floor, Metrocity Minami Ikebukuro, 29-12, Minami Ikebukuro
2-chome, Toshima-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN, declares:

- (1) that she knows well both the Japanese and English languages;
- (2) that she translated Japanese Application No. H09-103455
from Japanese to English;
- (3) that the attached English translation is a true
and correct translation of the above-identified Japanese
Application to the best of her knowledge and belief; and
- (4) that all statements made of her own knowledge
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application or any patent issuing thereon.

November 30, 2007

Date



Yuka NAKAMURA

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domicile or Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	c/o SONY CORPORATION 7-35, Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan
15	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Masakazu KOYANAGI
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domicile or Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	c/o SONY CORPORATION 7-35, Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan
20	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Tadafusa TOMITAKA
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domicile or Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	c/o SONY CORPORATION 7-35, Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan
25		

	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Toshiyuki IIJIMA
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domicile or Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	c/o SONY CORPORATION
5		7-35, Kitashinagawa
		6-chome, Shinagawa-ku,
		Tokyo, Japan
	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Naoyasu HOSONUMA
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inventor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Domicile or Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	c/o SONY CORPORATION
10		7-35, Kitashinagawa
		6-chome, Shinagawa-ku,
		Tokyo, Japan
	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Ken TAMAYAMA
	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant <input type="checkbox"/>	
15	<input type="checkbox"/> ID Number <input type="checkbox"/>	000002185
	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	SONY CORPORATION
	<input type="checkbox"/> Representative <input type="checkbox"/>	Nobuyuki IDEI
	<input type="checkbox"/> Agent <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> ID number <input type="checkbox"/>	100082762
20	<input type="checkbox"/> Patent Attorney <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Name <input type="checkbox"/>	Masatomo SUGIURA
	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone number <input type="checkbox"/>	03-3980-0339
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[Title of Document] Specification

[Title of the Invention] Controller for Photographing
Apparatus and Photographing System

[Scope of Claims for a Patent]

5 [Claim 1]

A controller for a photographing apparatus having
a photographing portion with driving means that allows the
photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
comprising:

10 displaying means for displaying a panorama picture
generated with a picture photographed by the photographing
means; and

controlling means for referencing the panorama
picture and varying the photographing direction of the
15 photographing means.

[Claim 2]

A controller for a photographing apparatus having
a photographing portion with driving means that allows the
photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
20 the controller comprising:

an operation area in which a panorama picture
generated with a picture photographed by the photographing
means is displayed; and

picture selecting means for allowing the user to
25 designate a desired point in said operation area, selecting
an object photographed by the photographing means
corresponding to the designated point, and moving the selected

object to desired positional coordinates of the driving means.

[Claim 3]

A controller for a photographing apparatus having
a photographing portion with driving means that allows the
5 photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
the controller comprising:

an operation area in which a panorama picture
generated with a picture photographed by the photographing
means is displayed; and

10 picture selecting means for allowing the user to
designate a desired area in said operation area, selecting
an object photographed by the photographing means
corresponding to the designated area, and moving an object
at the position corresponding to a desired point generated
15 with the desired area to desired positional coordinates of
the driving means.

[Claim 4]

The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
wherein the photographing portion is connected
20 through a transmission line.

[Claim 5]

The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
wherein the current position of the driving means
is displayed on the panorama picture.

25 [Claim 6]

The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
wherein the moving range of the driving means is

displayed on the panorama picture.

[Claim 7]

The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
wherein the angle of view of the photographing
5 means is displayed on the panorama picture.

[Claim 8]

The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
wherein said picture selecting means has a second
operation area in which a current picture photographed by
10 the photographing means is displayed, and

wherein an object at a designated position is moved
to desired positional coordinates of the driving means in
the second operation area.

[Claim 9]

15 The controller as set forth in claim 1, 2, or 3,
further comprising:

commanding means for commanding the generation
of the panorama picture.

[Claim 10]

20 A photographing system having a photographing
portion with driving means that allows the photographing
direction of photographing means to be varied and a controller
for a photographing apparatus, the controller controlling
the photographing portion,

25 wherein the controller comprises:

an operation area in which a panorama picture
generated with a picture photographed by the photographing

means is displayed; and

picture selecting means for selecting an object
photographed by the photographing means in said operation
area and moving the selected object to desired positional
5 coordinates of the driving means.

[Claim 11]

The photographing system as set forth in claim
10,

wherein the photographing portion and the
10 photographing controller are connected through a transmission
line.

[Claim 12]

The photographing system as set forth in claim
10, further comprising:

15 commanding means for commanding the generation
of the panorama picture.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Technical Field to which the Invention belongs]

20 The present invention relates to a controller for
a photographing apparatus and a photographing system with
a high operational characteristic and a high visibility
suitable for a photographing operation of the apparatus that
is disposed at a remote place and that is used for a monitoring
25 operation, an observing operation, a guiding operation, a
presenting operation, and so forth.

[0002]

[Prior Art]

As shown in Fig. 23, when the user controls a photographing apparatus disposed at a remote place, he or she operates a pan tilter in eight directions (up, down, left, right, upper right, lower right, upper left, and lower left directions) with eight-direction keys, a zooming controller, and a wide-angle controller so as to photograph a desired object while observing a photographed picture 6A on a monitor 2. In the structure shown in Fig. 23, the user moves a cursor 7 to one of the direction keys 10 with a mouse 8 and clicks the mouse. Thereby, the user drives a pan tilter to the designated direction. Alternatively, after the user has controlled a photographing apparatus disposed at a remote place in the above-described method and registered pan tilter information and zoom information of positions of pictures to be photographed, he or she drives the photographing apparatus at absolute positions corresponding to the registered positions so as to select pictures.

[0003]

[Subject that the Invention is to solve]

In the conventional controller, a picture that is displayed on the monitor is limited in the range of which the photographing apparatus is moved by the pan tilter. Thus, when the user photographs a desired object, he or she should operate the pan tilter in the full range thereof. Consequently, the user should have skill in operating the pan tilter.

[0004]

When the user changes the photographing direction with the conventional direction keys, even if he or she stops pressing the direction keys, since the pan tilter does not immediately stops and thereby he or she may not catch a desired object. When the direction varying speed of the photographing apparatus with the pan tilter is low, although such a problem may be solved, since the response characteristic deteriorates, a high operational characteristic cannot be obtained.

[0005]

When the user wants to place a desired object at the center of the angle of view of the photographing apparatus, since he or she controls the photographing direction while observing a picture on the monitor, he or she should determine the photographing direction on trial and error basis. Thus, the user may spend a long time for controlling the photographing apparatus. Moreover, to properly operate the photographing apparatus, the user should have skill.

[0006]

When picture and control information is exchanged with a photographing apparatus disposed at a remote place through a low-capacity network, the control information may be lost and/or picture information may be delayed due to an irregularity of their arrival intervals. If the displacement of the pan tilter or the zooming controller is operated for picture and control information that has been delayed or lost, even if the user causes the pan tilter and the zooming controller to place the object at the desired

position, the pan tilter and the zooming controller do not properly operate. Thus, the object is placed at an improper position due to the delay. In addition, depending on the line condition, the arrival intervals of picture information vary. Thus, the user should control the pan tilter and the zooming controller based on a prediction. Consequently, the user cannot properly control the pan tilter and the zooming controller.

[0007]

Therefore, an object of the present invention is to provide a controller for a photographing apparatus for allowing the user to designate a desired position or a desired area on a panorama picture displayed as a part or all the moving range of a pan tilter so that the user can easily obtain a desired picture with the photographing apparatus.

[0008]

Another object of the present invention is to provide a controller for a photographing apparatus and a photographing system with a high visibility and a high operational characteristic that allow the user to designate a desired position or a desired area on a screen and select an object with the designated position or area and the photographing apparatus to place the selected object at the center of the screen.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Subject]

The present invention described in claim 1 is a

controller for a photographing apparatus having a
photographing portion with driving means that allows the
photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
comprising a displaying means for displaying a panorama picture
5 generated with a picture photographed by the photographing
means, and a controlling means for referencing the panorama
picture and varying the photographing direction of the
photographing means.

[0010]

10 The present invention described in claim 2 is a
controller for a photographing apparatus having a
photographing portion with driving means that allows the
photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
the controller comprising an operation area in which a panorama
15 picture generated with a picture photographed by the
photographing means is displayed, and a picture selecting
means for allowing the user to designate a desired point
in the operation area, selecting an object photographed by
the photographing means corresponding to the designated point,
20 and moving the selected object to desired positional
coordinates of the driving means.

[0011]

 The present invention described in claim 3 is a
controller for a photographing apparatus having a
25 photographing portion with driving means that allows the
photographing direction of photographing means to be varied,
the controller comprising an operation area in which a panorama

picture generated with a picture photographed by the
photographing means is displayed, and a picture selecting
means for allowing the user to designate a desired area in
the operation area, selecting an object photographed by the
5 photographing means corresponding to the designated area,
and moving an object at the position corresponding to a desired
point generated with the desired area to desired positional
coordinates of the driving means.

[0012]

10 The present invention describe in claim 10 is a
photographing system having a photographing portion with
driving means that allows the photographing direction of
photographing means to be varied and a controller for a
photographing apparatus, the controller controlling the
15 photographing portion, wherein the controller comprises an
operation area in which a panorama picture generated with
a picture photographed by the photographing means is displayed,
and a picture selecting means for selecting an object
photographed by the photographing means in the operation
20 area and moving the selected object to desired positional
coordinates of the driving means.

[0013]

A picture photographed by a pan tilter camera that
is disposed at a remote place and that can be moved in various
25 directions is sent to a computer. The picture is displayed
as a panorama picture in a display area of a monitor. The
direction of a picture selecting means corresponding to the

direction of an object to be placed at the center of the angle of view of the photographing apparatus in the panorama picture is designated by a pointing device connected to the computer. Since the pan tilter is controlled with reference to the panorama picture, a desired picture can be photographed by the photographing apparatus.

[0014]

In addition, the environment of the place at which the pan tilter camera is disposed is displayed as a panorama picture in the panorama operation area of the monitor of the computer. A desired point to be placed at the center of the angle of view of the photographing apparatus in a picture of the panorama operation area or a desired point generated with a desired area is designated by the pointing device connected to the computer. Thus, in the method of which the result is input, a selected object can be easily placed at the center of the screen. In addition, since a desired point in the operation area on the screen or a desired point generated with a desired area is designated with the pointing device, the user can easily know the driving direction of the pan tilter camera. In addition to the panorama operation area, another operation area for a picture may be displayed.

[0015]

[Embodiment of the Invention]

Next, with reference to the accompanying drawings, embodiments of the present invention will be described. Fig. 1 shows an outline of the structure of a system according

to a first embodiment of the present invention. A monitor 2 and a mouse 8 are connected to a computer 1. The computer 1 controls the driving operation of a pan tiler camera 3 disposed at a remote place. In other words, a controller for the photographing apparatus is composed of the computer 1.

[0016]

The pan tiler camera 3 is integrally composed of a pan tiler portion and a camera portion. In Fig. 1, the pan tiler camera 3 is disposed on a real scene as denoted by 4. A screen of a picture photographed by the pan tiler camera 3 is denoted by 5. This screen is hereinafter referred to as a photographed screen. The photographed screen 5 is an actually photographed screen. When a zoom lens of the pan tiler camera 3 is placed on the telephotograph side, the angle of view decreases. In contrast, when the zoom lens of the pan tiler camera 3 is placed on the wide-angle side, the angle of view increases.

[0017]

A picture on a photographed screen 5 captured by a pan tiler camera 3 is sent to a computer 1 through a video cable or the like. The picture data sent to the computer 1 is decoded and displayed on a monitor 2. The monitor 2 displays the photographed screen 5 in an operation area 6A on the monitor 2. A panorama picture including the picture photographed by the pan tiler camera 3 is displayed in a panorama operation area 6B. An arrow-shaped cursor 7 is

displayed at the position of a mouse pointer of a mouse 8 in the operation area 6A or the panorama display area 6B. The user designates a desired point or a desired area in the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B with the mouse 8 so as to operate the pan tilter camera 3. In the panorama operation area 6B, a frame 6C that represents the current position and the angle of view of the pan tilter and a pan tilter limiter 6D are superimposed to the panorama picture. The pan tilter limiter 6D represents the moving range of the pan tilter camera. In addition, when necessary, a panorama generation button 6E is displayed on the monitor 2.

[0018]

As shown in Fig. 2, the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B are displayed on the monitor 2. With the mouse 8, the user can move the cursor 7 and designate a desired point or a desired point generated with a desired area in the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B. The user operates the pan tiler so that an object corresponding to the designated point is placed at the center of the operation area 6A. In other words, when the user inputs a result to be displayed, an object selected corresponding to the input data is displayed at the center of the operation area 6A.

[0019]

Fig. 3 is a block diagram showing the overall system according to the embodiment of the present invention. The

system shown in Fig. 3 comprises a camera portion 11, a pan
tilter portion 12, a TV monitor 13, a computer 1, a pointing
device 14 (such as a mouse 8), and a monitor 2. The pan
tilter camera 3 comprises a camera portion 11 and a pan tilter
portion 12. For example, the camera portion 11 is disposed
on the pan tilter portion 12. The camera portion 11 comprises
a lens block portion 15, a zoom lens 16, a zoom portion 17,
a zoom lens motor 18, a solid state image pickup device 19,
a signal separating/automatic gain adjusting circuit (SH/AGC)
20, an A/D converter 21, and a signal processing circuit
22. The camera portion 11 represents a video camera.

[0020]

The pan tilter portion 12 comprises a mode controller
23, a camera controller 24, a pan tilter controller 25, a
pan motor 26, a tilt motor 27, and a pan tilter 28. The
computer 1 comprises a controlling portion 31, a video capture
portion 29, and a storing portion 30. The video capture
portion 29 is composed of a video capture board.

[0021]

Rays emitted from an object are focused to the
solid state image pickup device 19 through a lens set and
a diaphragm of the lens block portion 15. An example of
the solid state image pickup device 19 is a CCD (Charge Coupled
Device). The focused rays (field picture) are converted
into a picture signal and then sent to the signal
separating/automatic gain adjusting circuit 20. The signal
separating/automatic gain adjusting circuit 20 samples/holds

the picture signal and controls the gain of the picture signal with a control signal of an auto iris (AE). The resultant picture signal is sent to the signal processing circuit 22 through the A/D converter 21. The signal processing circuit 22 converts the received picture signal into a brightness signal (Y), a color signal (C), and a video signal and sends these signals as picture signals to the TV monitor 13 and the video capture portion 29 of the computer 1.

[0022]

The lens block portion 15 of the camera portion 11 drives the zoom lens 16 and thereby varies the angle of view of an object to be photographed. The lens block portion 15 causes the zoom lens motor 18 that is for example a stepping motor to rotate, thereby driving the zoom lens 16 corresponding to a drive command received from the camera controller 24 of the pan/tilt portion 12. The camera controller 24 performs a lens controlling operation (for example, focusing operation and zooming operation), an exposure controlling operation (for example, diaphragm controlling operation, gain controlling operation, and speed controlling operation of electronic shutter), white balance controlling operation, a picture quality controlling operation, and so forth of the camera portion 11. In addition, the camera controller 24 interfaces with the mode controller 23. As interface controlling operations with respect to the zoom lens 16, the camera controller 24 sends a control signal to the motor driver corresponding to a drive command of the zoom lens

16 received from the mode controller 23 so that the zoom lens 16 is placed at the position designated by the command. In addition, the camera controllers 24 always send positional information of the zoom lens 16 to the mode controller 23.

5 [0023]

The camera portion 11 is disposed on the pan tilt portion 12 that has a degree of freedom that are rotating directions of two axes of pan and tilt. The pan tilt portion 12 causes the pan motor 26 and the tilt motor 27 to rotate corresponding to a drive command received from the pan tilt controller 25, thereby driving a pan head and a tilt head of the pan tilt 28. The motors 26 and 27 are composed of for example stepping motors. The pan tilt controller 25 sends a control signal to the motor drivers so that the pan head and the tilt head are driven to positions corresponding to a pan drive command and a tilt drive command received from mode controller 23. In addition, the pan tilt controller 25 always sends positional information of the pan head and the tilt head to the mode controller 23.

20 [0024]

The mode controller 23 controls the overall system corresponding to the internal states of the camera portion 11 and the pan tilt portion 12 and the interface information received from the outside of the pan tilt camera 3 as will be described later. The mode controller 23 is connected with for example the computer 1 and RS-232C interface. The mode controller 23 sends drive commands received from the

computer 1 to the pan tilter controller 25 and the camera controller 24 so as to drive the pan tilter 28 and the zoom lens 16 of the lens block portion 15. In addition, the mode controller 23 sends current positional information received from the pan tilter controller 25 and the camera controller 24 to the computer 1.

[0025]

According to the embodiment, the computer 1 is used to select a picture photographed by the pan tilter camera 3. The computer 1 processes graphics in the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B displayed on the monitor 2 and information of a designated position and a clicking operation of the pointing device 14 (mouse 8) and sends the resultant data to the mode controller 23. To display a picture photographed by a camera portion 11 on the monitor 2, a video capturing portion 29 is used. The video capturing portion 29 allows a video signal received from the camera portion 11 to be displayed on the monitor 2 with a desired picture quality. In addition, the video capturing portion 29 allows a picture to be captured in a particular picture format (for example, bit map format, still picture JPEG format, moving picture JPEG format, or the like) with a particular picture quality and to be stored in the storing portion 30 (for example, a hard disk) of the computer 1.

[0026]

Next, with reference to Fig. 4, an example of a method for generating a panorama picture displayed in the

panorama operation area 6B will be described. It should be noted that according to the present invention, a panorama picture may be generated by another method. When the panorama generation button 6E is pressed, a panorama picture is generated.

[0027]

Now, it is assumed that the environment in the place where the pan tilter camera 3 is disposed is a spherical surface. The spherical surface is referred to as virtual spherical surface. In Fig. 4, two adjacent pictures on the virtual spherical surface are combined to one panorama picture. To generate a panorama picture, as shown in Fig. 4A, the pan tilter camera 3 is disposed at the center of the sphere and photographs two adjacent pictures on the virtual spherical surface. The pan tilter camera 3 photographs a plane perpendicular to the optical axis of the lens thereof. Fig. 4D shows a situation of which two adjacent pictures on the virtual spherical surface are photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 and the two pictures are mapped to the plane perpendicular to the optical axis. When two adjacent pictures are simply combined, they overlap and distort at the overlapped portion.

[0028]

To prevent two adjacent pictures from overlapping and distorting, they are mapped to the virtual spherical surface as shown in Fig. 4B. Fig. 4E shows a situation of which two photographed pictures that are planes perpendicular

to the optical axis are mapped to the virtual spherical surface. In such a manner, planes perpendicular to the optical axis (namely, photographed pictures) are mapped to the virtual spherical surface. The mapped pictures are combined in such a manner that an overlapped portion and an unnecessary portion are removed. The picture mapped on the virtual spherical surface is normalized with longitude and latitude. Thus, a panorama picture as shown in Figs. 4C and 4D is generated.

[0029]

Next, a method for generating a panorama picture will be described. In this method, as shown in Fig. 5, one panorama picture is generated by combining 10 pictures. First, the pan tilter camera 3 (not shown) disposed at the center of the sphere photographs 10 pictures. At this point, as shown in Fig. 5A, by matching the optical axis of the lens of the pan tilter camera 3 to positions denoted by circles, the pan tilter camera 3 can obtain pictures 1 to 10. As shown in Fig. 5B, the pictures photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 are pictures on the plane perpendicular to the optical axis of the lens. The obtained pictures are mapped to the virtual spherical surface. Thereafter, as shown in Fig. 5C, the pictures are normalized with latitude and longitude. The pictures are obtained in such a manner that they are smoothly combined without a break. Thereafter, an overlapped portion and an unnecessary portion are removed. Thus, a panorama picture of which 10 pictures are smoothly combined is generated.

Next, with reference to Fig. 6, another method

for generating a panorama picture will be described. In this method, pixels obtained by the pan tilter camera 3 are designated to pixels of a panorama picture normalized with latitude and longitude (namely, coordinates (s, t)). As
5 in the method shown in Fig. 5, when pixels of pictures photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 are designated to pixels of a panorama picture, part of pixels of the panorama picture may not be designated. All pixels of pictures photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 should be designated
10 to pixels of the panorama picture. The panorama picture is composed of pixels calculated for individual coordinate points in the following process. Angular coordinates (α, β) (see Fig. 6B) on the virtual spherical surface corresponding to coordinates (s, t) (see Fig. 6) of a panorama picture
15 are calculated corresponding to Eq. (1).

[0030]

$$(\alpha, \beta) = (a(s), b(t)) \quad \dots (1)$$

(Eq. (1) will be described later with reference to Fig. 7.)

[0031]

20 As shown in Fig. 6C, coordinate data (ξ, η) of the obtained picture is calculated with the coordinates (s, t) , the angular coordinates (θ, ϕ) of a pan tilter 28, and photographing magnification assuming that the wide edge of the photographing apparatus is defined as one magnification
25 corresponding to Eq. (2).

[0032]

$$(\xi, \eta) = (f(\alpha, \beta, \theta, \phi, \gamma), g(\alpha, \beta, \theta, \phi, \gamma))$$

...(2)

(Eq. (2) will be described later with reference to Fig. 8.)

[0033]

Corresponding to the above-described equations,
5 pixels of the panorama picture are correlated with obtained
pictures so as to generate a combined picture (namely, the
panorama picture).

[0034]

Next, with reference to Fig. 7, a method for
10 converting coordinates (s, t) of a panorama picture into
angular coordinates (α , β) on the virtual spherical surface
will be described. In Fig. 7A, PragMin represents angular
data at the left edge assuming that the home position of
the pan tilter 28 (for example, the center in the moving
15 range of the pan tilter 28) is 0 (rag). PragMax represents
angular data at the right edge assuming that the home position
of the pan tilter 28 is 0 (reg). Ny_2 represents a horizontal
coordinate of the panorama operation area 6B. $-Ny_2 / 2$
represents coordinate data at the right edge of the panorama
20 operation area 6B.

[0035]

To obtain the pan angle α with the coordinate data
s, since the following relation is satisfied

$$(PragMax - \alpha) : (PragMax - PragMin) = (Ny_2 / 2 - s) : Ny_2$$

25

the pan angle α is expressed as follows.

$$\alpha = PragMax - (PragMax - PragMin) \times (Ny_2 / 2 -$$

s) / Ny_2

[0036]

In Fig. 7B, TragMin represents angular data at the upper edge assuming that the home position of the pan
tilter 28 is 0 (rag). TragMax represents angular data at
the lower edge assuming that the home position of the pan
tilter 28 is 0 (rag). Nz_2 represents a vertical coordinate
of the panorama operation area 6B. $-Nz_2 / 2$ represents
coordinate data at the upper edge of the panorama operation
areae 6B. $Nz_2 / 2$ represents coordinate data at the lower
edge of the panorama operation area 6B.

[0037]

To obtain the tilt angle β with the coordinate
data t, since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(TragMax - \beta) : (TragMax - TragMin) = (Nz_2 / 2 - t) : Nz_2$$

the tilt angle β is expressed as follows.

$$\beta = TragMax - (TragMax - TragMin) \times (Nz_2 / 2 - t) / Nz_2$$

[0038]

Next, with reference to Fig. 8, the method for
converting a plane into a spherical surface will be described.
As shown in Fig. 8A, the spatial coordinates of a point (ξ ,
 η) of a photographed picture orienting the home position
(the origin of latitude and longitude) are expressed as follows.

[0039]

[Equation 1]

$$\begin{aligned}
P &= e_x + k_1 \xi e_\xi + k_2 \eta e_\eta \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} + k_1 \xi \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} + k_2 \eta \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -k_1 \xi \\ k_2 \eta \end{bmatrix}
\end{aligned}$$

[0040]

At this point, the following relations are satisfied.

$$k_1 = \tan (\lambda / 2\gamma / (N_y / 2))$$

$$k_2 = \tan (\mu / 2\gamma / (N_z / 2))$$

where (N_y , N_z) represent the drive ranges (y direction and z direction) of the mouse pointer of the pointing device 14 (mouse 8); (λ , μ) represents the horizontal angle of view and vertical angle of view at the wide edge; and γ represents the current zoom relative magnification (magnification information) assuming that the wide edge is one time (x 1).

[0041]

In addition, as shown in Fig. 8B, a three-dimensional rotation matrix is generally expressed as follows.

[0042]

[Equation 2]

$$R_y(\phi) = \begin{bmatrix} \cos\phi & 0 & -\sin\phi \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ \sin\phi & 0 & \cos\phi \end{bmatrix}$$

$$R_z(\theta) = \begin{bmatrix} \cos\theta & -\sin\theta & 0 \\ \sin\theta & \cos\theta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

[0043]

Since the direction of one point (ξ, η) of a
photographed picture that is panned and tilted by angular
information (θ, ϕ) from the home position is the same as the
5 direction of one point (α, β) apart from the home position,
the following relation is satisfied.

[0044]

$$R_z(\theta) R_y(\phi) p = 1 R_z(\alpha) R_y(\beta) e_x$$

10 When the formula is solved with respect to p , the
following relation is satisfied.

[0045]

[Equation 3]

$$\begin{aligned} p &= 1 R_y(-\phi) R_z(\alpha - \theta) R_y(\beta) e_x \\ &= 1 \begin{bmatrix} \cos(\alpha - \theta) \cos\phi \cos\beta + \sin\phi \sin\beta \\ \sin(\alpha - \theta) \cos\beta \\ -\cos(\alpha - \theta) \sin\phi \cos\beta + \cos\phi \sin\beta \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

15 [0046]

Thereon,

[0047]

[Equation 4]

$$\rho = \sqrt{\begin{bmatrix} a \\ b \\ c \end{bmatrix}^2} \quad (3)$$

[0048]

Thus, ξ and η are obtained as follows.

[0049]

$$1 = 1 / a$$

$$\xi = -1b / k_1 = -b / k_{1a}$$

$$\eta = 1c / k_2 = c / k_{2a}$$

With the above formula, (ξ, η) projected to the photograph coordinates can be obtained with coordinate data with an angle (α, β) from the home position.

[0050]

$$\xi = (-\sin(\alpha - \theta) \cos \beta) / (k_1 (\cos(\alpha - \theta) \cos \varphi \cos \beta + \sin \varphi \sin \beta))$$

$$\eta = (-\cos(\alpha - \theta) \sin \varphi \cos \beta + \cos \varphi \sin \beta) / (k_2 (\cos(\alpha - \theta) \cos \varphi \cos \beta + \sin \varphi \sin \beta))$$

Coordinate data (ξ, η) on the obtained picture by the pan tilter camera 3 can be obtained from angular coordinates (α, β) on the virtual spherical surface corresponding to coordinate (s, t) of a panorama picture. Thus, a panarama picture can be generated.

[0051]

In contrast, coordinate data with an angle (α, β) can be obtained with (ξ, η) projected to photograph coordinates corresponding to the following formula.

[0052]

Since $1 = |p|$

$$a = 1 / \sqrt{(1 + k_1^2 \xi^2 + k_2^2 \eta^2)}$$

$$b = -k_1 \xi / \sqrt{(1 + k_1^2 \xi^2 + k_2^2 \eta^2)}$$

$$c = k_2 \eta / \sqrt{(1 + k_1^2 \xi^2 + k_2^2 \eta^2)}$$

5 where $\sqrt{(\quad)}$ represents that the square root of the calculated result in (\quad) is obtained.

[0053]

Form Formula (3), the following relations are satisfied.

$$10 \quad a = \cos(\alpha - \theta) \cos \varphi \cos \beta + \sin \varphi \sin \beta$$

$$b = \sin(\alpha - \theta) \cos \beta$$

$$c = -\cos(\alpha - \theta) \sin \varphi \cos \beta + \cos \varphi \sin \beta$$

[0054]

Thus, the following relations are satisfied.

$$15 \quad a \sin \varphi + c \sin \theta = \sin \beta$$

$$\tan(\alpha - \theta) = b / (a \cos \theta - c \sin \theta)$$

Thus, the following relations are satisfied.

$$\beta = \sin^{-1} (\sin \varphi / \sqrt{(1 + k_1^2 \xi^2 + k_2^2 \eta^2)} + \sin \theta k_2 \eta / \sqrt{(1 + k_1^2 \xi^2 + k_2^2 \eta^2)})$$

$$20 \quad \alpha = \tan^{-1} (-k_1 \xi / (\cos \varphi - k_2 \eta \sin \theta)) + \theta$$

[0055]

Thus, the pan angle α and the tilt angle β can be obtained as follows.

$$(\alpha, \beta) = (f(\xi, \eta, \theta, \varphi, \gamma), g(\xi, \eta, \theta, \varphi, \gamma))$$

$$25 \quad \dots (4)$$

[0056]

If an error is permitted to some extent, (α, β)

can be expressed as follows.

[0057]

$$\alpha = \theta + (\lambda / \gamma) \times (\xi / N_y)$$

$$\beta = \varphi + (\mu / \gamma) \times (\eta / N_z)$$

5 In other words, Eq. (4) can be simplified as follows.

$$(\alpha, \beta) = (f(\xi, \theta, \gamma), g(\eta, \varphi, \gamma)) \quad \dots (5)$$

[0058]

Next, with reference to Fig. 9, a method for calculating angular information (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 expressed by Eq. (4) and Eq. (5) with positional coordinates (ξ, η) of the operation area 6A will be described. First of all, an example of a method for directly designating a desired point in the operation area 6A will be described. Assuming that the center of the operation area 6A is defined as $(0, 0)$ of relative coordinates as shown in Fig. 9A, the positional coordinates (ξ, η) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the operation area 6A are obtained.

[0059]

Next, another method for designating a desired point generated with a desired area in the operation area 6A will be described. As shown in Fig. 9A, after a start point $(m1, n1)$ in a desired area is designated, an end point $(m2, n2)$ in the desired area is designated. As the coordinates at the center of the rectangle generated with these two points, a desired point (ξ, η) is obtained as Eq. (6).

$$(\xi, \eta) = ((m1, n1) + (m2, n2)) / 2 \quad \dots (6)$$

[0060]

Fig. 9A shows coordinates of the mouse 8 (pointing device 14) in the operation area 6A. In Fig. 9A, the moving range (y direction and z direction) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the operation area 6A is denoted by (Ny_1, Nz_1) . Angular coordinates (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 are obtained with positional coordinates (ξ, η) of the desired point (at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8), angular information (θ, φ) that represents the orientation of the pan tilter 28, and magnification information (γ) of the current zoom relative magnification assuming that the wide edge of the zoom lens 16 is defined as one magnification corresponding to Eq. (4) or Eq. (5).

[0061]

The angular coordinates (α, β) shown in Fig. 9B are used to place a position designated by the pointing device to the center of the photographed screen assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is defined as the origin of latitude and longitude.

[0062]

The coordinates obtained in Fig. 9 may be absolute coordinates of the screen of the monitor 2 or relative coordinates assuming that the center of the operation area 6A is defined as $(0, 0)$. In the coordinates shown in Fig. 9, coordinates in the pan direction are represented by ξ , m_1 , m_2 , θ , and α and coordinates in the tilt direction are represented by η , n_1 , n_2 , φ , and β .

[0063]

Thus, when the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A, the angular information (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 is calculated with the angular information (θ, φ) of the current pan tilter 28 obtained with received data, the zoom magnification information (γ), and the positional information (ξ, η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 corresponding to Eq. (4) or Eq. (5) so that the designated object is placed at the center of the operation area 6A. The angular coordinates (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 are converted into internal positional information (PNew, TNew) as shown in Figs. 11A and 11B. The resultant internal positional information (PNew, TNew) is stored in a send buffer along with an absolute position drive command of the pan tilter 28. In addition, as will be described later, a data send request flag (FlagSo) is set so that data is sent upon occurrence of a timer event.

[0064]

Next, with reference to Fig. 10, a method for converting positional coordinates (ξ, η) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the panorama operation area 6B of the panorama picture into angular coordinates (α, β) corresponding to the present invention will be described. As with the method for directly designating a desired point in the operation area 6A, as shown in Fig. 10A, with a method for directly designating a desired point in the panorama operation area 6B, positional coordinates (ξ, η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 can be obtained.

[0065]

Next, another method for designating a desired point generated with a desired area in the panorama operation area 6B will be described. As shown in Fig. 10A, after a start point ($m1, n1$) of a desired area is designated, the end point ($m2, n2$) of the desired area are designated. Corresponding to Eq. (6), a desired point (ξ, η) is obtained.

[0066]

In Fig. 10A, the moving range (y direction and z direction) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the panorama operation area 6B (the moving range is defined as the coordinates of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 (pointing device 14) in the panorama operation area 6B) is represented by (Ny_2, Nz_2). The moving range is limited by the pan tilter limiter 6D denoted by dotted lines in the panorama operation area 6B. The pan tilter limiter 6D represents the moving range of the optical axis of the lens of the pan tilter camera 3. In other words, a point cannot be designated out of the pan tilter limiter 6D. Positional coordinates (x, y) in the panorama operation area 6B, angle-of-view information (s, t), and angular information (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 can be obtained with the positional coordinates (ξ, η) of the desired point, the angular information (θ, ϕ) representing the orientation of the pan tilter 28, and the magnification information (γ) as the current zoom relative magnification assuming that the wide edge of the zoom lens 16 is defined as one magnification corresponding to Eq. (7), Eq. (8), and

Eq. (9).

[0067]

$$(x, y) = (f_0(\theta), g_0(\varphi)) \quad \dots (7)$$

$$(s, t) = (f_1(\gamma), g_1(\gamma)) \quad \dots (8)$$

5 $(\alpha, \beta) = (f(\xi), g(\eta)) \quad \dots (9)$

In Fig. 10B, positional coordinates (x, y) represent the current orientation of the pan tilter 28 assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is defined as the origin of latitude and longitude. Angle-of-view information
10 (s, t) is the current angle of view in the operation area 6A. Fig. 10B represents the states of the zoom lens and the pan tilter in the panorama operation area 6B.

[0068]

In Fig. 10C, angular coordinates (α, β) are used
15 to place the position designated by the pointing device to the center of the photographed screen assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is defined as the origin of latitude and longitude. (PragMax, TragMax) and (PragMin, TragMin) represent the moving range of the pan tilter (namely,
20 the range represented by the pan tilter limiter 6D). Fig. 10C shows a drive target value in the pan tilter moving range.

[0069]

In Fig. 10, coordinates to be obtained may be absolute coordinates on the screen of the monitor 2 or relative
25 coordinates assuming that the center of the panorama operation area 6B is defined as $(0, 0)$. In the coordinates, coordinates in the pan direction are represented by $\xi, m1, m2, x, s$, and

α and coordinates in the tilt direction are represented by η , $n1$, $n2$, y , t , and β .

[0070]

Thus, when the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B, angular information (α , β) of the pan tilter 28 is calculated with positional information (ξ , η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 corresponding to Eq. (9) so that the designated object in the operation area 6A is placed at the center of the operation area 6A. Angular coordinates (α , β) of the pan tilter 28 are converted into internal positional information (PNew, TNew) of the pan tilter 28 corresponding to the method shown in Figs. 11A and 11B. The internal positional information (PNew, TNew) of the pan tilter 28 is stored in a send buffer along with an absolute position drive command of the pan tilter 28. In addition, as will be described later, a data send request flag (FlagSo) is set so that data is sent upon occurrence of the timer event.

[0071]

Next, a method for converting internal positional information (p , t) of the pan tilter 28 into angular information (α , β) and a method for converting angular coordinates (α , β) into internal positional information (PNew, TNew) of the pan tilter 28 will be described with reference to Fig. 11. In Fig. 11A, PragMin represents angular data at the left edge assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is 0 (deg). PragMax represents angular data at the right

edge assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28
 is 0 (rag). PdatMin represents internal count data at the
 leftedgeofthepantiltercontroller25. PdatMaxrepresents
 internal counter data at the right edge of the pan tilter
 5 controller 25.

[0072]

To obtain the pan angle θ with the pan data p,
 since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(PragMax - \theta) : (PragMax - PragMin) = (PdatMax - p) : (PdatMax - PdatMin)$$

the pan angle θ is expressed as follows.

$$\theta = PragMax - (PragMax - PragMin) \times (PdatMax - p) / (PdatMax - PdatMin)$$

[0073]

15 Thus, the pan data p is expressed as follows.

$$p = PdatMax - (PragMax - \theta) \times (PdatMax - PdatMin) / (PragMax - PragMin)$$

[0074]

20 In addition, to obtain the pan data PNew with the
 pan angle α , since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(PragMax - \alpha) : (PragMax - PragMin) = (PdatMax - p\text{-new}) : (PdatMax - PdatMin)$$

the pan data PNew is expressed as follows.

$$PNew = PragMax - (PragMax - \alpha) \times (PdatMax - PdatMin) / (PragMax - PragMin)$$

[0075]

In Fig. 11B, TragMin represents angular data at

the upper edge assuming that the home position of the pan
tilter 28 is 0 (rag). TragMax represents angular data at
the lower edge assuming that the home position of the pan
tilter 28 is 0 (rag). TdatMin represents internal count data
at the upper edge of the pan tilter controller 25. TdatMax
represents internal count data at the lower edge of the pan
tilter controller 25.

[0076]

To obtain the tilt angle ϕ with the tilt data t ,
since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(\text{TragMax} - \phi) : (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) = (\text{TratMax} - t) : (\text{TdatMax} - \text{TdatMin})$$

the tilt angle ϕ is expressed as follows.

$$\phi = \text{TragMax} - (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) \times (\text{TdatMax} - t) / (\text{TdatMax} - \text{TdatMin})$$

[0077]

Thus, the tilt data t is expressed as follows.

$$t = \text{TdatMax} - (\text{TragMax} - \phi) \times (\text{TdatMax} - \text{TdatMin}) / (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin})$$

[0078]

To obtain the tilt data TNew with the tilt angle β ,
since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(\text{TragMax} - \beta) : (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) = (\text{TdatMax} - t\text{-new}) : (\text{TdatMax} - \text{TdatMin})$$

the tilt data TNew is expressed as follows.

$$\text{TNew} = \text{TragMax} - (\text{TragMax} - \beta) \times (\text{TdatMax} - \text{TdatMin}) / (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin})$$

[0079]

Next, with reference to Figs. 12A and 12B, a method for converting positional coordinates (ξ, η) in the panorama operation area 6B into angular coordinates (α, β) of the pan
tilter 28 and a method for converting angular information
(θ, ϕ) of the pan tilter 28 into positional coordinates (x, y) in the panorama operation area 6B will be described. In
Fig. 12A, PragMin represents angular data at the left edge
assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is 0
(rag). PragMax represents angular data at the right edge
assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is 0
(rag). Ny_2 represents a horizontal coordinate of the panorama
operation area 6B. $-Ny_2 / 2$ represents coordinate data at
the left edge of the panorama operation area 6B. $Ny_2 / 2$
represents coordinate data at the right edge of the panorama
operation area 6B.

[0080]

To obtain the pan angle α with the coordinate data
 ξ , since the following relation is satisfied,

$$\frac{(\text{PragMax} - \alpha)}{\xi} : \frac{(\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin})}{Ny_2} = \frac{(Ny_2 / 2 - \xi)}{Ny_2}$$

the pan angle α is expressed as follows.

$$\alpha = \text{PragMax} - (\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin}) \times \frac{(Ny_2 / 2 - \xi)}{Ny_2}$$

[0081]

To obtain the coordinate data x with the pan angle
 θ , since the following relation is satisfied,

$(\text{PragMax} - \theta) : (\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin}) = (\text{Ny}_2 / \theta - x) :$
 Ny_2

the coordinate data x is expressed as follows.

$$x = \text{Ny}_2 / \square - (\text{PragMax} - \theta) \times \text{Ny}_2 / (\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin})$$

5 [0082]

In Fig. 12B, TragMin represents angular data at the upper edge assuming that the home position of the pan tilter 28 is 0 (rag). TragMax represents angular data at the lower edge assuming that the home position of the pan
10 tilter 28 is 0 (rag). Nz_2 represents a vertical coordinate of the panorama operation area 6B. $-\text{Nz}_2 / 2$ represents coordinate data at the upper edge of the panorama operation area 6B. $\text{Nz}_2 / 2$ represents coordinate data at the lower edge of the panorama operation area 6B.

15 [0083]

To obtain the tilt angle β with the coordinate data η , since the following relation is satisfied,

$$(\text{TragMax} - \beta) : (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) = (\text{Nz}_2 / 2 - \eta) : \text{Nz}_2$$

20 the tilt angle β is expressed as follows.

$$\beta = \text{TragMax} - (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) \times (\text{Nz}_2 / 2 - \eta) / \text{Nz}_2$$

[0084]

To obtain the coordinate data y with the tilt angle ϕ , since the following relation is satisfied,
25

$$(\text{TragMax} - \phi) : (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) = (\text{Nz}_2 / 2 - y) : \text{Nz}_2$$

the coordinate data y is expressed as follows.

$$y = Nz_2 / 2 - (\text{TragMax} - \theta) \times Nz_2 / (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin})$$

[0085]

Next, with reference to Fig. 13, a method for
5 converting angle-of-view information (ψ, ω) captured by the
pan tilter 28 into angle-of-view information (s, t) of the
frame 6C in the panorama operation area 6B will be described.
Fig. 13A shows the current angle-of-view information $(\psi,$
 $\omega)$ of the pan tilter 28. The angle-of-view information $(\psi,$
10 $\omega)$ is expressed as follows.

$$(\psi, \omega) = 1 / \gamma \times (\psi_0, \omega_0)$$

At this point, (ψ_0, ω_0) represent the horizontal angle of
view and the vertical angle of view at the wide edge. γ represents
the magnification of the lens assuming that the wide edge
15 is defined as one magnification.

[0086]

As shown in Fig. 13B, PragMin represents angular
data at the left edge assuming that the home position of
the pan tilter 28 is 0 (rag). PragMax represents angular
20 data at the right edge assuming that the home position of
the pan tilter 28 is 0 (rag). Ny_2 represents a horizontal
coordinate of the panorama operation area 6B. $-Ny_2 / 2$
represents coordinate data at the left edge of the panorama
operation area 6B. $Ny_2 / 2$ represents coordinate data at
25 the right edge of the panorama operation area 6B.

[0087]

To obtain the horizontal angle of view s with the

horizontal angle of view ψ , since the following relation is satisfied,

$$\psi : (\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin}) = s : Ny_2$$

horizontal angle of view s is expressed as follows.

5
$$s = \psi \times Ny_2 / (\text{PragMax} - \text{PragMin})$$

[0088]

In Fig. 13C, TragMin represents angular data at the lower edge assuming that the home position of the panner 28 is 0 (rag). TragMax represents angular data at the upper edge assuming that the home position of the panner 28 is 0 (rag). Nz₂ represents a vertical coordinate of the panorama operation area 6B. -Nz₂ / 2 represents coordinate data at the lower edge of the panorama operation area 6B. Nz₂ / 2 represents coordinate data at the upper edge of the panorama operation area 6B.

[0089]

To obtain the vertical angle of view t with the vertical angle of view ω , since the following relation is satisfied,

20
$$\omega : (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin}) = t : Nz_2$$

the vertical angle of view t is expressed as follows.

$$t = \omega \times Nz_2 / (\text{TragMax} - \text{TragMin})$$

[0090]

Thus, the angle-of-view information (s, t) shown in Fig. 13D is displayed as the frame 6C in the panorama operation area 6B.

[0091]

Next, with reference to Fig. 14, a method for converting the positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 into magnification information (γ) will be described. In Fig. 14, the vertical axis represents information of lens magnification, whereas the horizontal axis represents the internal information of zoom lens. The positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 is converted into the magnification information (γ) by the computer 1 corresponding to a conversion graph shown in Fig. 14. For example, the positional information (z) is converted into the magnification information (γ) corresponding to a ROM table or an equation.

[0092]

Next, with reference to Fig. 15, an example of a control algorithm of the computer 1 will be described. When the program is executed, the flow advances to step S1. At step S1, the operation area 6, the panorama operation area 6B, the cursor 7, and the pan tilter limiter 6D are initialized and displayed on the monitor 2 as shown in Fig. 2. The range of the pan tilter limiter 6D may be fixed or variable. At step S2, a timer is set so that the computer 1 communicates with the mode controller 23 at predetermined intervals. After such initial setup operations have been completed, the flow advances to step S3. At step S3, the system waits for an occurrence of an event. Corresponding to an event that occurs, the flow advances to a relevant step (for example, a timer event (at step S4), a mouse button down event (at step S5), a mouse button up event (at step

S6), and a mouse move event (at step S7)).

[0093]

Next, with reference to a flow chart shown in Fig. 16, the algorithm of the timer event will be described. The timer event is an event for causing the computer 1 to communicate with the mode controller 23 at predetermined intervals. The timer event occurs at intervals of for example 50 msec. When the timer event occurs, the flow advances to step S11. At step S11, the system determines whether or not a communication port has been set. When the communication port has been set (namely, the determined result at step S11 is Yes), the flow advances to step S12. When the communication port has not been set (namely, the determined result at step S11 is No), the flow advances to step S18. At the first time the communication port has not been set, the flow advances to step S18. At step S18, the system opens the communication port. Actually, at step S18, the system opens an RS-232C port of the computer 1. Thereafter, the flow advances to step S16.

[0094]

Thereafter, in the timer event, the system performs a receive data checking process, an analyzing process, a data sending process for data stored in the send buffer (such as the drive command for the pan tilter 28), and/or a communication data sending process for state check requests for the pan tilter 28 and the zoom lens 16. In this algorithm, the flow advances from step S11 to step S12. At step S12,

the system determines whether or not data is stored in the receive buffer. When data is stored in the receive buffer (namely, the determined result at step S12 is Yes), the flow advances to step S13. When data is not stored in the receive buffer (namely, the determined result at step S12 is No), the flow advances to step S14. At step S13, the system analyzes received data stored in the receive buffer and obtains positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 and positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 that have been requested to the mode controller 23. The system converts the positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 and the positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 into angular information (θ , ϕ) of the pan tilter 28 and magnification information (γ) of the zoom lens 16 corresponding to methods shown in Fig. 11 and 14.

[0095]

At step S14, the system determines whether or not a data send request has been issued. When a data send request has been issued (FlagSo == True) (namely, the determined result at step S14 is Yes), the flow advances to step S19. At step S19, the system sends data stored in the send buffer and resets the send request flag (FlagSo == False). Next, the flow advances to step S16. An example of data stored in the send buffer is data of a drive command of the pan tilter 28 designated with the mouse 8. When a send request has not been issued (FlagSo == False) (namely, the determined result at step S14 is No), the flow advances to step S15.

At step S15, the system sends position request commands for the pan tilter 28 and the zoom lens 16 from the computer 1 to the mode controller 23.

[0096]

5 At step S16, the system compares the old positional information of the pan tilter 28 with the new positional information thereof and determines whether or not the positional information (p, t) has varied. When the positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 has varied (namely, 10 the determined result at step S16 is Yes), the flow advances to step S20. When the positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 has not varied (namely, the determined result at step S16 is No), the flow advances to step S17. At step S17, the system compares the old positional information of 15 the zoom lens 16 with the new positional information thereof and determines whether or not the positional information (z) has varied. When the positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 has varied (namely, the determined result at step S17 is Yes), the flow advances to step S20. When the 20 positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 has not varied (namely, the determined result at step S17 is No), this event is completed.

[0097]

 At step S20, when the positional information (p, 25 t) of the pan tilter 28 and/or the positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 has varied, the system redraws the frame 6C in the panorama operation area 6B. At this point,

the system converts the positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 into the angular information (θ, ϕ) . In addition, the system converts the positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 into the magnification information (γ) . With the converted angular information (θ, ϕ) and magnification information (γ) , the system calculates positional coordinates (x, y) of the pan tilter 28 and angle-of-view information (s, t) that is the angle of view displayed in the operation area 6A corresponding to Eq. (7) and Eq. (8), respectively. Corresponding to the resultant positional coordinates (x, y) and angle-of-view information (s, t) , the system draws the frame 6C in the panorama operation area 6B.

[0098]

At step S16, the system compares the old positional information (p, t) of the pan tilter 28 with the new positional information (p, t) thereof. Alternatively, the system may compare the old angular information (θ, ϕ) of the pan tilter 28 with the new angular information (θ, ϕ) thereof. In this case, at step S20, with the new angular information (θ, ϕ) , the system calculates the positional coordinates (x, y) corresponding to Eq. (7). Likewise, at step S17, the system compares the old positional information (z) of the zoom lens 16 with the new positional information (z) thereof. Alternatively, the system may compare the old magnification information (γ) of the zoom lens 16 with the new magnification information (γ) thereof. In this case, at step S20, the system

calculates the angular information (s, t) with the new magnification information (γ) corresponding to Eq. (8).

[0099]

Next, with reference to a flow chart shown in Fig. 17, the algorithm of the mouse move event will be described. The mouse move event is an event that occurs when the mouse 8 is moved. According to the present invention, the mouse move event is used to select a drive position of the panner 28. When the mouse move event occurs, the flow advances to step S21. At step S21, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A, the panorama operation area 6B, or the other area shown in Fig. 2. When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S21 is Yes), the flow advances to step S22. When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S21 is No), the flow advances to step S24. At step S22, the system sets an operation area flag (Flag-rin == True) and clears a panorama operation area flag (Flag-pin == False).

[0100]

At step S24, since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A, the system clears the operation area flag (Flag-rin == False). At step S25, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B.

When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined result at step S25 is Yes), the flow advances to step S26. When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined result at step S25 is No), the flow advances to step S27. At step S26, the system sets the panorama operation area flag (Flag-pin == True). At step S27, since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the panorama operation area 6B, the system clears the panorama operation area flag (Flag-pin == False).

[0101]

When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined result at step S21 or step S25 is Yes), at step S23, the system obtains positional coordinates (ξ , η) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 assuming that the center of the operation area is defined as (0, 0) of relative coordinates.

[0102]

In this flow chart, when the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S22 is Yes), the system sets the operation area flag (Flag-rin == True). When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S22 is No), the system clears the operation area flag (Flag-rin == False). When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation

area 6B (namely, the determined result at step S25 is Yes), the system sets the panorama operation area flag (Flag-pin == True). When the mouse pointer 8 is not present in the panorama operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S25 is No), the system clears the panorama operation area flag (Flag-pin == False). When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined result at step S21 or S35 is Yes), the system designates the positional coordinates of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 to (ξ, η) assuming that the center of each operation area is defined as (0, 0) of relative coordinates.

[0103]

Next, the mouse button down event and the button up event will be described. In the method for directly designating a desired point of the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B, only the algorithm of a mouse button down event shown in Fig. 18 is used. In the method for designating a desired point generated with a desired area, both the algorithm of a mouse button down event shown in Fig. 19 and the algorithm of a mouse button up event shown in Fig. 20 are used.

[0104]

With reference to a flow chart shown in Fig. 18, the algorithm of the button down event for the method for directly designating a desired point of the operation area will be described. This event is an event that occurs when

the left button of the mouse 8 is pressed. In the present invention, this event is used as trigger information for driving the pan tilter 28. When this event occurs, the flow advances to step S31. At step S31, the system determines
5 whether or not the mouse pointer 8 is present in the operation area 6A corresponding to the operation area flag. When the operation area flag has been set (FlagRin == True) (namely, the determined result at step S31 is Yes), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A,
10 the flow advances to step S32. When the operation area flag has been cleared (FlagRin == False) (namely, the determined result at step S31 is No), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S34.

15 [0105]

When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S31 is Yes), the flow advances to step S32. At step S32, the system calculates angular information (α , β) of the
20 pantilter28withtheangularinformation (θ , ϕ) of the current pantilter28obtainedfromthereceiveddata, themagnification information (γ) of the zoom lens 16, and the positional coordinate (ξ , η) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the operation area 6A corresponding to Eq. (4) or Eq. (5) so
25 that the designated object in the operation area is placed at the center of the screen.

[0106]

At step S33, the system converts the angular information (α , β) of the pan tilter 28 into the internal positional information (PNew, TNew) corresponding to the method shown in Fig. 11. The system stores the converted positional information (PNew, TNew) in the send buffer along with the absolute position drive command of the pan tilter 28. In addition, the system sets the data send request flag (FlagSo == True) and sends the data with the process of the timer event.

10 [0107]

After the system has determined that the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S31 is No), the flow advances to step S34. At step S34, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B corresponding to the panorama operation area flag. When the panorama operation flag has been set (FlagPin == True) (namely, the determined result at step S34 is Yes), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 of the panorama operation area 6B is present in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow advances to step S35. When the panorama operation flag has been cleared (FlagPin == False) (namely, the determined result at step S34 is No), this event is completed.

25 [0108]

In this flow chart, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the

operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B
corresponding to the operation area flag (FlagRin) and the
panorama operation area flag (FlagPin). When the mouse
pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area
5 6A and the panorama operation area 6B, this event becomes
invalid.

[0109]

When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present
in the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined
10 result at step S34 is Yes), the flow advances to step S35.
At step S35, the system calculates angular information (α ,
 β) of the pan tilter 28 with the positional information (ξ ,
 η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in the panorama operation
area 6B corresponding to Eq. (9) so that the designated object
15 in the operation area is placed at the center of the screen.
Thereafter, the flow advances to step S33.

[0110]

Next, with reference to Figs. 19 and 20, the
algorithms of the button down event and the button up event
20 for the method for designating a desired point generated
with a desired area in the panorama operation area 6B will
be described, respectively.

[0111]

With reference to the flow chart shown in Fig.
25 19, the algorithm of the button down event will be described.
This event is an event that occurs when the left button of
the mouse 8 is pressed. In this embodiment, this event is

used as an event for determining the start point of a desired area. When this event occurs, the flow advances to step S41. At step S41, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A corresponding to the operation area flag (FlagRin).
5 When the operation area flag has been set (FlagRin == True) (namely, the determined result at step S41 is Yes), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S42. When the operation
10 area flag has been cleared (FlagRin == False) (namely, the determined result at step S41 is No), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S44.

[0112]

15 When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A (namely, the determined result at step S41 is Yes), at step S42, the system sets an operation areastartpointobtainflag (FlagRstart=True). Thereafter, the flow advances to step S43. At step S43, the system stores
20 positional coordinates (m1, n1) at which the left button of the mouse 8 is pressed as the start point of the desired area.

[0113]

25 After the system has determined that the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A, at step S44, the system determines whether or not the mousepointerofthemouse8ispresentinthepanoramaoperation

area 6B corresponding to the panorama operation area flag (FlagPin). When the panorama operation area flag has been set (FlagPin == True) (namely, the determined result at step S44 is Yes), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow advances to step S45. When the panorama operation area flag has been cleared (FlagPin == False) (namely, the determined result at step S44 is No), this event is completed.

[0114]

In this flow chart, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A or the panorama operation area 6B corresponding to the operation area flag (FlagRin) and the panorama operation area flag (FlagPin). When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not in the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B, this event becomes invalid.

[0115]

When the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the determined result at step 44 is Yes), the flow advances to step S45. At step S45, the system sets a panorama operation area start point obtain flag (FlagPstart). Thereafter, the flow advances to step S43.

[0116]

Next, with reference to a flow chart shown in Fig. 20, the algorithm of the button up event will be described. This event is an event that occurs when the left button of

the mouse 8 is released. In the present invention, the button up event is used as an event for determining the end point of a desired area.

[0117]

5 When this event occurs, the flow advances to step S51. At step S51, the system determines whether or not the operation area flag has been set (FlagRin == True) (namely, the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A). When the operation area flag has been set (FlagRin = True) (namely, the determined result at step S51 is Yes),
10 since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S52. When the operation area flag has been cleared (FlagRin == False) (namely, the determined result at step S51 is No), since the mouse
15 pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S57. At step S52, the system determines whether or not the left button of the mouse 8 has been pressed in the operation area 6A corresponding to an operation area start point obtain flag (FlagRstart). When
20 the start point obtain flag has been set (FlagRstart == True) (namely, the determined result at step S52 is Yes), since the left button of the mouse 8 has been pressed in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S53. When the start point obtain flag has been cleared (FlagRstart == False) (namely,
25 the determined result at step S52 is No), since the left button of the mouse 8 has not been pressed in the operation area 6A, the flow advances to step S57.

[0118]

In other words, at steps S51 and S52, the system determines whether or not the operation area flag and the operationareastartpointobtainflaghavebeensetorcleared.

5 When the operation area flag and the start point obtain flag have been set (FlagRin == True and FlagRstart == True), the system determines that the drive command has taken place in the operation area 6A. Otherwise, at steps S57 and S58, the system determines whether or not the panorama operation
10 area flag (FlagPin) and the panorama operation area start point obtain flag (FlagPstart) have been set or cleared.

[0119]

When the drive command has taken place in the operation area (namely, the operation area flag and the start
15 pointobtainflaghavebeenset (FlagRin==TrueandFlagRstart == True), at step S53, the system stores the positional coordinates (m2, n2) at which the left button of the mouse 8 has been released in the operation area 6A as the end point of the desired area. Thereafter, the system calculates
20 positional information (ξ , η) as the coordinates of the center of the rectangle area generated with the positional coordinates (m1, n1) of the start point of the desired area and the positional coordinates (m2, n2) of the end point thereof.

[0120]

25 At step S54, the system calculates angular information (α , β) of the pan tilter 28 with the angular information (θ , ϕ) of the pantilter obtained from the received

data, the magnification information (γ) of the zoom lens 16, and the positional information (ξ, η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 corresponding to Eq. (4) or Eq. (5).

[0121]

5 At step S55, the system converts the angular information (α, β) of the pan tilter 28 into the internal positional information (PNew, TNew) of the pan tiler 28 corresponding to the method shown in Fig. 11 and stores the positional information (PNew, TNew) to the send buffer along
10 with the absolute position drive command. In addition, the system sets the data send request flag (FlagSo == True) and sends data with the process of the timer event.

[0122]

 At step S56, after the system has checked the mouse
15 button up event in each operation area, the system clears the operation area start point obtain flag and the panorama operation area start point obtain flag (FlagRstart == False and FlagPstart == False). Thereafter, this event is completed.

20 [0123]

 At step S57, the system determines whether or not the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B corresponding to the panorama operation area flag (FlagPin). When the panorama operation area flag
25 has been set (FlagPin == True) (namely, the determined result at step S57 is Yes), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is present in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow

advances to step S58. When the panorama operation area flag has not been set (FlagPin == False), since the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 is not present in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow advances to step S56. At step S58, the system
5 determines whether or not the left button of the mouse 8 has been pressed in the panorama operation area 6B corresponding to the panorama operation area start point obtain flag (FlagPstart). When the start point obtain flag has been set (FlagPstart == True) (namely, the determined result at
10 step S58 is Yes), since the left button of the mouse 8 has been pressed in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow advances to step S59. When the start point obtain flag has not been set (FlagPstart == False) (namely, the determined result at step S58 is No), since the left button of the mouse
15 8 has not been pressed in the panorama operation area 6B, the flow advances to step S56.

[0124]

When the panorama operation area flag and the panorama operation start point obtain flag have been set
20 (FlagPin == True and FlagPstart == True) at steps S57 and S58, the system determines that a drive command has issued in the panorama operation area 6B. When the conditions at steps S51, S52, and S58 are not satisfied, this event becomes invalid.

25 [0125]

When the drive command has been issued in the panorama operation area 6B (namely, the panorama operation area flag

and the start obtain flag have been set (FlagPin == True
and Flag-pstart == True), the flow advances to step S59.
At step S59, the system stores the positional coordinates
(m2, n2) at which the left button of the mouse 8 has been
5 released in the panorama operation area 6B as the end point
of the desired area. The system calculates the positional
information (ξ , η) of the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 as
the coordinates of the center of the rectangle area with
the positional coordinates (m1, n1) of the start point of
10 the desired area that has been stored and the positional
coordinates (m2, n2) of the end point of the desired area
corresponding to Eq. (6).

[0126]

At step S60, the system calculates angular
15 information (α , β) of the pan tiler 28 with the positional
information (ξ , η) at the mouse pointer of the mouse 8 in
the panorama operation area 6B corresponding to Eq. (9) so
that the designated object in the panorama operation area
is placed at the center of the screen. Thereafter, the flow
20 advances to step S55.

[0127]

In the above-described embodiment, one computer
performs all processes of the system. On the other hand,
according to a second embodiment of the present invention,
25 as shown in Fig. 21, processes are shared by a server computer
and a client computer so as to control a pan tiler camera
through a network that has a restriction of a communication

capacity. In Fig. 21, a computer 1 is connected to a monitor 2 and a mouse 8. The computer 1 controls the operation of a pan tilter camera 3 disposed at a remote place through a transmission line and a server 9. In other words, the
5 computer 1 composes a controller for a photographing apparatus. The transmission line may be a communication line (radio communication line or a cable communication line), a network, or the like. The computer 1 has a relation of a client to the server 9. A plurality of computers 1 can be connected
10 to the server 9.

[0128]

The pan tilter camera 3 and the server 9 are disposed on a real scene in an environment denoted by reference numeral 4. A screen photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 disposed
15 on the real scene 4 is denoted by reference numeral 5. Hereinafter, the screen 5 is referred to as photographed screen. The photographed screen 5 is an actually photographed screen. When the zoom lens is placed on the telephotograph side, the angle of view decreases. In contrast, when the
20 zoom lens is placed on the wide-angle side, the angle of view increases.

[0129]

A picture photographed by the pan tilter camera 5 is sent to a server 9. The server 9 converts the photographed
25 picture into video data. The video data is sent to the computer 1 through a transmission line. The video data sent to the computer 1 is decoded and displayed on the monitor 2. The

monitor 2 displays the photographed screen 5 in the operation area 6A thereof. A panorama picture with which a picture photographed by the pan tilter camera 3 is superimposed is displayed in the panorama operation area 6B. As with the
5 above-described embodiment, a desired point of the panorama operation area 6B (or the operation area 6A) or a desired point generated with a desired point is designated with the mouse 8 (cursor 7). The pan tilter camera 3 is driven through the server 9 and the transmission line and thereby the
10 photographed screen is moved. In other words, the pan tilter camera 3 is controlled through the server 9 so that the selected object is placed at the center of the operation area 6A.

[0130]

Fig. 22 is a block diagram showing the overall
15 system of the second embodiment of the present invention. Since the structures and functions of the camera portion 11 and the pan tilter portion 12 are the same as those of the first embodiment, the structures thereof are omitted in Fig. 22. The server 9 comprises a controlling portion
20 131, a video capture portion 129, and a storing portion 130. The video capture portion 129 is composed of a video capture board. The computer 1 is connected to a transmission path 132 through a network. The computer 1 is composed of a
controlling portion 31 and so forth as with the first embodiment.
25 Since the algorithms used in the computer 1 are the same as those of the first embodiment, for simplicity, their description is omitted.

[0131]

Rays emitted from an object are sent to the camera portion 11 as with the first embodiment. The camera portion 11 converts the rays into various signals such as a brightness signal (Y), a color signal (C), and a video signal and supplies the resultant signals as picture signals to a TV monitor 13 and the video capture portion 129 of the server 9. As with the first embodiment, the pan tilter portion 12 has a mode controller, a camera controller, and a pan tilter controller. These controllers control the camera portion 11 and the pan tilter 28. The mode controller 23 controls the overall system corresponding to the internal states of the camera portion 11 and the pan tilter portion 12 and an external command as with the first embodiment.

[0132]

The mode controller 23 is connected to the server 9 through a communication path (in reality, RS232C interface). The mode controller 23 sends commands received from the server 9 and commands received from the computer 1 through the server 9 to the pan tilter controller and the camera controller so as to drive the pan tilter and the zoom lens of the lens block portion. The mode controller 23 always receives information from the pan tilter controller and the camera controller so as to send the inner state of the pan tilter camera to the outside through the server 9.

[0133]

The server 9 obtains the inner state of the pan

tilter camera (for example, the current positional information of the pan tilter and the zoom lens, and so forth) from the mode controller 23 of the pan tilter portion 12 at predetermined intervals. To send a picture photographed by the camera portion 11 to the transmission path 132, the video capture portion 129 is used. The video capture portion 129 converts a picture signal received from the camera portion 11 to digital picture data that is sent to the transmission path 132 in any quality (in the present embodiment, still picture JPEG format or still picture bitmap format). The resultant digital picture is stored in a storing portion 130 (for example, a hard disk).

[0134]

When the computer 1 issues a connection request to the server 9, the server 9 sends a GUI (Graphical User Interface) panel information to the computer 1 so as to display a picture on the monitor 2. The panel information is an arrangement of a panel and a program that runs on the computer 1 when the mouse is operated on the panel. Examples of the panel information are programs written in HTML, JAVA, and so forth. Picture data photographed by the pan tilter camera and the state thereof are sent to the computer 1 through the transmission path 132 at predetermined intervals.

[0135]

In another embodiment, Internet is used as the transmission path 132. Data is exchanged on the transmission path 132 using the HTTP protocol. The computer 1 causes

the monitor 2 to display GUI panel information, picture information, the state of the pan tilt camera, and so forth received from the server 9 with an Internet browser. An operation area 6A, a panorama operation area 6B, a panorama picture generation button 6E, zoom operation buttons, a cursor 7 of a pointing device 14 (mouse 8), and so forth displayed on the GUI panel of the monitor 2. Picture data received from the server is decoded and displayed in the operation area 6A. When the picture data is updated, the picture is also rewritten in the operation area 6A. The moving range of the pan tilt camera, the position of the pan tilt, angle-of-view of the zoom, and so forth are displayed on the panorama operation area 6B, with the same method as the first embodiment. The computer 1 executes the operation program for the GUI panel received from the server 9.

[0136]

In the second embodiment of the present invention, a drive command of the pan tilt camera 3 and an operation command of the server 9 are generated with a clicking operation of the mouse 8. When the mouse 8 is clicked on the panorama generation button 6E, the computer 1 causes the server 9 to generate a panorama screen. When the server 1 receives this command, as with the first embodiment, the server 9 moves the pan tilt and the zoom lens to relevant positions, photographs ten pictures at these positions, maps them to the virtual spherical surface, normalizes them with latitude and longitude, and combines them. After the server 9 has

combined these pictures as a panorama picture, it converts the panorama picture into a JPEG format picture. The servers 9 sends the resultant picture to the computer 1 through the transmission line 132.

5 [0137]

The computer 1 displays the received panorama picture in the panorama operation area 6B of the monitor 2. Thus, the user can see the environment at the position of the pan tiler camera 3 at a glance. When the mouse 8 is
10 clicked in the panorama operation area 6B, the computer 1 sends to the server 9 a command (absolute position drive command) that causes the position at which the mouse is clicked on the panorama picture to be placed at the center of the operation area 6A (picture). The server 9 sends this command
15 to the pan tiler camera 3. Thus, the pan tiler is driven to a relevant position. In such a manner, the drive target of the pan tiler is designated on the panorama screen. Consequently, the user can easily operate the pan tiler without need to consider a drive command on the network,
20 a delay of a video signal, and so forth.

[0138]

In the first embodiment, whenever the pan tiler camera 3 sends a picture to the computer 1, the computer 1 combines it and displays the combined picture in the panorama
25 operation area 6B. Alternatively, after the computer has combined all pictures, it may display the resultant picture in the panorama operation area 6B.

[0139]

According to the first embodiment, the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B are displayed on the monitor 2 connected to the computer 1. Alternatively,
5 the operation area 6A and/or the panorama operation area 6B may be displayed on another display unit other than the monitor 2.

[0140]

According to the first embodiment, the pan tilter
10 camera 3 is driven by operating the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B with the mouse 8. Alternatively, one of the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B may be operated with the mouse 8.

[0141]

According to the first embodiment, the operation
15 area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B are displayed on the monitor 2. Alternatively, only the panorama operation area 6B may be displayed on the monitor 2.

[0142]

According to the first embodiment, the operation
20 area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B are displayed on the monitor 2. By operating the operation area 6A and the panorama operation area 6B with the mouse 8, the pan tilter camera 3 is freely driven. Alternatively, a panorama
25 picture may be displayed on the monitor 2. In this case, the pan tilter camera 3 may be driven with an operation portion such as eight-direction keys.

[0143]

According to the above-described embodiments, the photographing range of the pan tilter camera 3 may be the maximum moving range of the pan tilter camera 3 or limited with a limiter. The function for limited the photographing range with the limiter may be provided by the pan tilter camera 3 or the computer 1.

[0144]

In the first embodiments, a desired point generated with a desired area is placed at the center of thereof. Alternatively, a desired point may be placed at for example the center of gravity, the incenter, the circumcenter, or the orthocenter of the area.

[0145]

According to the first embodiment, a panorama picture displayed in the panorama operation area 6B is not limited as long as it represents the environment in which the pan tilter camera 3 is disposed. For example, the panorama picture may be a moving picture, an intermittent still picture, or a still picture.

[0146]

According to the second embodiment, for simplicity, one computer 1 is connected to the remote server 9 and the pan tilter camera 3 that are disposed at a remote place. Alternatively, a plurality of servers 9 and a plurality of pan tilter cameras 3 may be disposed worldwide. For example, one pan tilter camera 3 may be controlled by a plurality

of computers through for example Internet.

[0147]

[Effects of the Invention]

According to the present invention, with a panorama
5 picture, the user can see the environment in which the
photographing apparatus is disposed at a glance. Since the
positional information of the pan tilter, the angle of view
of the zoom lens, and the moving range of the pan tilter
are added as information to the picture, the user can easily
10 know the state of the photographing apparatus.

[0148]

In addition, when the user designates a desired
object in the panorama operation area, he or she can easily
capture it in the field of view of the picture to be photographed.
15 Moreover, by designating an object in the operation area,
the user can precisely adjust the position that cannot be
designated in the panorama operation area. In comparison
with the conventional method of which the user operates
direction keys while observing a monitored picture (namely,
20 a picture is photographed through a feed-back operation and
an experience), according to the present invention, a desired
object can be displayed at the center of the operation area
with the clicking operation of the mouse.

[0149]

25 In addition, according to the present invention,
since the position to which the pan tilter moves can be predicted
beforehand, on a communication line that causes picture and

information data to be delayed and/or lost (such as Internet),
the user can seamlessly operate the pan tilt camera. Thus,
according to the present invention, the pan tilt camera
can be easily operated with high visibility.

5 [Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Fig. 1]

An external view for explaining a system according
to an embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 2]

10 A schematic diagram for explaining a screen of
a monitor according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 3]

A block diagram showing the structure of the system
according to the embodiment of the present invention.

15 [Fig. 4]

A schematic diagram for explaining a method for generating
a panorama picture according to the embodiment of the present
invention.

[Fig. 5]

20 A schematic diagram for explaining a method for
generating a panorama picture according to the embodiment
of the present invention.

[Fig. 6]

A schematic diagram for explaining a method for
generating a panorama picture according to the embodiment
25 of the present invention.

[Fig. 7]

A schematic diagram for explaining a method for generating angular information of a pan tilt camera with positional coordinates in a panorama operation area according to the embodiment of the present invention.

5 [Fig. 8]

A schematic diagram for explaining a plane - spherical surface converting method according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 9]

10 A schematic diagram for explaining a coordinate converting method in the operation area according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 10]

15 A schematic diagram for explaining a coordinate converting method in the panorama operation area according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 11]

20 A schematic diagram for explaining positional information and angular information of a pan tilt camera according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 12]

25 A schematic diagram for explaining angular coordinates of the pan tilt camera and positional coordinates in the panorama operation area according to the embodiment of the present invention;

[Fig. 13]

A schematic diagram for explaining the angle of

view of the pan tilter camera and a frame in the panorama operation area according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 14]

5 A graph for explaining a conversion method of zoom data and magnification data according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 15]

10 A flow chart showing an example of the overall process according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 16]

 A flow chart showing an example of the process of a timer event according to the embodiment of the present invention.

15 [Fig. 17]

 A flow chart showing an example of the process of a mouse moving event according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 18]

20 A flow chart showing an example of the process of a mouse button down event according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 19]

25 A flow chart showing another example of the process of a mouse button down event according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 20]

A flow chart showing an example of the process of a mouse up/down event according to the embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 21]

5 A schematic diagram showing the structure of a system according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 22]

10 A block diagram showing the structure of the system according to the second embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 23]

A schematic diagram for explaining a controller for a photographing apparatus.

[Description of Reference Numerals]

15 1 ... Computer, 2 ... Monitor, 6A ... Operation area, 6B ... Panorama operation area, 7 ... Cursor, 9 ... Server, 11 ... Camera portion, 12 ... Pan tilter portion, 13 ... TV monitor, 14 ... Pointing device, 15 ... Lens block, 16 ... Zoom lens, 17 ... Zoom portion, 18, 26, 27 ... Motor, 19 ... Solid state image pickup device, 20 ... Signal separating/automatic gain adjusting circuit, 21 ... A/D converter, 22 ... Signal processing, 23 ... Mode controller, 24 ... Camera controller, 25 ... Pan tilter controller, 28 ... Pan tilter, 29 ... Video capture, 30 ... Storing portion, 31 ... Controlling portion

20

[Title of Document] Abstract

[Abstract]

[Subject]

5 To display moving range of a pan tiliter camera
as a panorama picture, and easily obtain a picture which
is designated referring to the panorama picture from the
pan tiliter camera.

[Solving Means]

10 A picture photographed by a camera portion 11 is
sent to a video capturing portion 29 of a computer 1. The
picture is displayed in an operation area 6A of a monitor
2. Apanorama picture of which pictures in part or all moving
range of a pan tiler 28 are combined is displayed in a panorama
operation area 6B. Apan tiler portion 12 sends positional
15 information of pan and tilt to the computer 1 through a mode
controller 23. With a mouse 8, the operation area 6A and
6B are operated so as to select an object. The computer
1 obtains data for driving the pan tiler 28. Thus, the
selected object is displayed at the center of the operation
20 area.

[Selected Drawing] Fig. 3

Translation of Drawings

FIG. 1

3 ... PAN TILTER CAMERA
5 6E ... PANORAMA GENERATION

FIG. 2

6A ... OPERATION AREA
6E ... PANORAMA GENERATION
10 6B ... PANORAMA OPERATION AREA

FIG. 3

(A) ... VIDEO SIGNAL
(B) ... DRIVE COMMAND
15 (C) ... POSITIONAL INFORMATION
(D) ... CONTROL, POSITIONAL INFORMATION
(E) ... ZOOM
15 ... LENS BLOCK
22 ... SIGNAL PROCESSING
20 11 ... CAMERA PORTION
13 ... TV MONITOR
28 ... PAN TILTER
26 ... PAN MOTOR
27 ... TILT MOTOR
25 24 ... CAMERA CONTROLLER
25 ... PAN TILTER CONTROLLER
23 ... MODE CONTROLLER

2 ... MONITOR
 6A ... OPERATION AREA
 6B ... PANORAMA OPERATION AREA
 31 ... CONTROLLING PORTION
 5 29 ... VIDEO CAPTURE
 30 .. STORING PORTION
 1 ... COMPUTER
 14 ... POINTING DEVICE

10 FIG. 6
 (1) ... PICTURE CONVERTED INTO SPHERICAL SURFACE IS
 NORMALIZED WITH LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE
 (2) ... CAPTURED PICTURE
 (3) ... OBTAINED PICTURE

15
 FIG. 7
 (1) ... PAN ANGLE
 (2) ... COORDINATE DATA
 (3) ... TILT ANGLE
 20 (4) ... COORDINATE DATA

FIG. 11
 (1) ... PAN ANGLE
 (2) ... PAN DATA
 25 (3) ... TILT ANGLE
 (4) ... TILT DATA

FIG. 12

- (1) ... PAN ANGLE
- (2) ... COORDINATE DATA
- (3) ... TILT ANGLE
- 5 (4) ... COORDINATE DATA

FIG. 13

- (1) ... HORIZONTAL ANGLE OF VIEW (ψ)
- (2) ... VERTICAL ANGLE OF VIEW (ω)
- 10 (3) ... PAN ANGLE
- (4) ... COORDINATE DATA
- (5) ... PAN ANGLE
- (6) ... COORDINATE DATA
- (7) ... HORIZONTAL ANGLE OF VIEW (s)
- 15 (8) ... VERTICAL ANGLE OF VIEW (t)

FIG. 14

- (1) ... INFORMATION OF LENS MAGNIFICATION
 - (2) ... INTERNAL INFORMATION OF ZOOM LENS
- 20

FIG. 15

- (A) ... START
- S1 ... INITIALIZE OPERATION AREA ON MONITOR.
- S2 ... SET TIMER EVENT.
- 25 S3 ... DETERMINE TYPE OF EVENT THAT OCCURS.
- S4 ... TIMER EVENT
- S5 ... MOUSE BUTTON DOWN EVENT

S6 ... MOUSE BUTTON UP EVENT

S7 ... MOUSE MOVE EVENT

FIG. 16

5 (A) ... START
(B) ... NO
(C) ... YES
(D) ... NO
(E) ... YES
10 (F) ... YES
(G) ... NO
(H) ... YES
(I) ... NO
(J) ... END
15 S11 ... HAS COMMUNICATION PORT BEEN SET ?
S12 ... IS DATA STORED IN RECEIVE BUFFER ?
S13 ... ANALYZE RECEIVE DATA, OBTAIN PAN TILTER POSITION
(p, t) AND ZOOM POSITION (z), AND CALCULATE PAN TILTER ANGLE
(θ , ϕ) AND ZOOM MAGNIFICATION (γ).
20 S14 ... IS SEND REQUEST FLAG FlagSo TRUE ?
S15 ... SEND PAN TILER, ZOOM POSITION REQUEST COMMUNICATION
DATA.
S18 ... SET COMMUNICATION PORT.
S19 ... SEND DATA STORED IN SEND BUFFER AND RESET FlagSo
25 TO FALSE.
S16 ... HAS PAN TILTER DATA VARIED ?
S17 ... HAS ZOOM DATA VARIED ?

S20 ... REDRAW FRAME IN PANORAMA PICTURE AREA.

FIG. 17

(A) ... START
5 (B) ... NO
(C) ... YES
(D) ... NO
(E) ... YES
(F) ... END
10 S21 ... IS MOUSE POINTER PRESENT IN OPERATION AREA ?
S23 ... OBTAIN COORDINATES (ξ, η) OF POSITION OF MOUSE POINTER
IN OPERATION AREA.
S25 ... IS MOUSE POINTER PRESENT IN PANORAMA OPERATION AREA ?

15 FIG. 18

(A) ... START
(B) ... END
S32 ... OBTAIN (α, β) WITH EACH DATA.
S33 ... CONVERT (α, β) INTO PANTILTER POSITIONAL COORDINATES
20 (PNew, TNew), STORE THEM AS ABSOLUTE POSITION DRIVE REQUEST
COMMUNICATION DATA TO COMMUNICATION BUFFER, AND SET FlagSo
TO TRUE.
S35 ... OBTAIN (α, β) WITH EACH DATA.

25 FIG. 19

(A) ... START
(B) ... END

S42 ... SET START POINT OBTAIN FLAG FlagRstart TO TRUE.
S43 ... OBTAIN COORDINATES (m1, n1) AT THE POINT.
S45 ... SET START POINT OBTAIN FLAG FlagPstart TO TRUE.

5 FIG. 20

(A) ... START

(B) ... END

S53 ... OBTAIN COORDINATES (m2, n2) AND THEREBY (ξ , η) AT
THIS POINT.

10 S54 ... OBTAIN (α , β) WITH EACH DATA.

S55 ... CONVERT (α , β) INTO PANTILTER POSITIONAL COORDINATES
(PNew, TNew), STORE THEM AS ABSOLUTE POSITION DRIVE REQUEST
COMMUNICATION DATA TO COMMUNICATION BUFFER, AND SET FlagSo
TO TRUE.

15 S56 ... SET START POINT OBTAIN FLAG FlagStart TO FALSE AND
FlagPstart TO FALSE.

S59 ... OBTAIN COORDINATES (m2, n2) AND THEREBY (ξ , η) AT
THIS POINT.

S60 ... OBTAIN (α , β) WITH EACH DATA.

20

FIG. 21

3 ... PAN TILTER CAMERA

9 ... SERVER

6E ... PANORAMA GENERATION

25

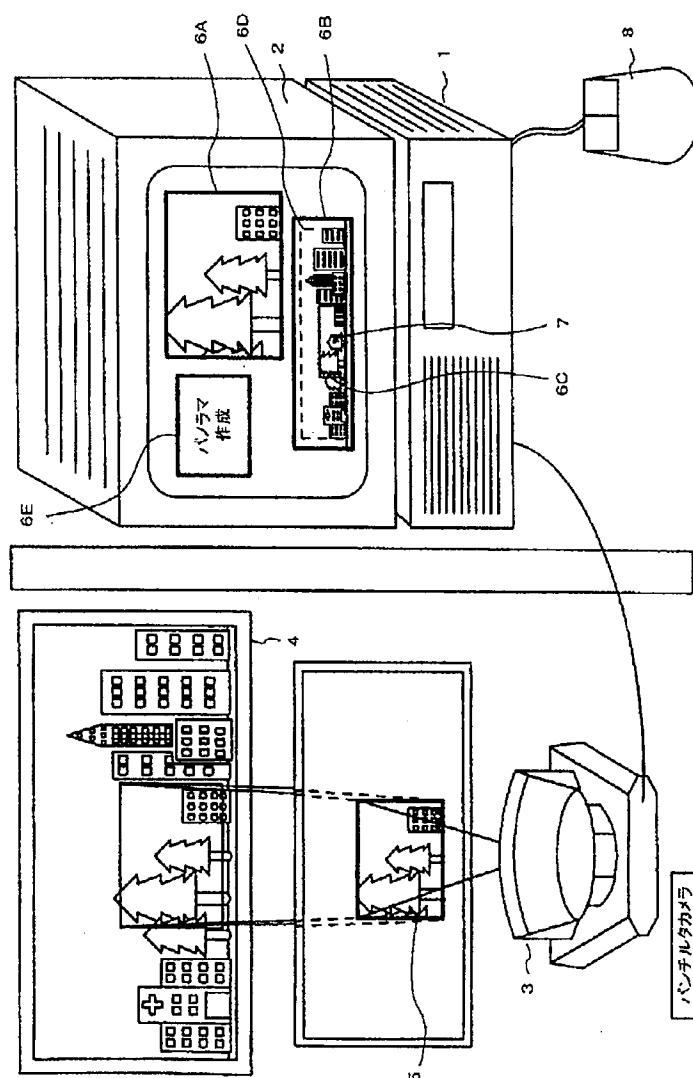
FIG. 22

(A) ... CAMERA CONTROL

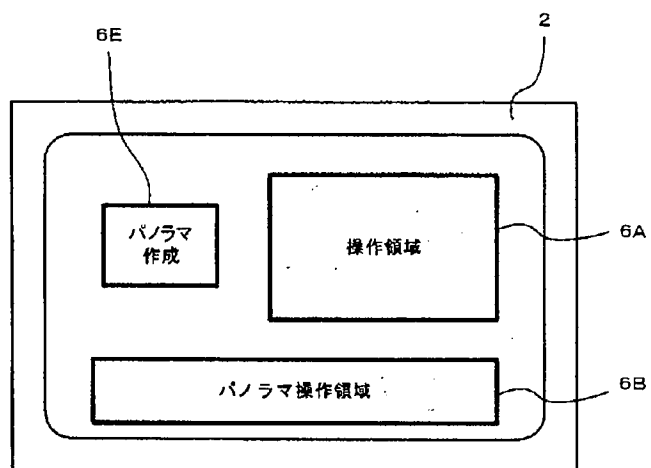
(B) ... VIDEO SIGNAL
 (C) ... CONTROL, POSITIONAL INFORMATION
 (D) ... PICTURE DATA
 (E) ... GUI PANEL
 5 (F) ... STATE
 (G) ... COMMAND
 (H) ... COMMAND
 11 ... CAMERA PORTION
 22 ... SIGNAL PROCESSING
 10 13 ... TV MONITOR
 12 ... PAN TILTER PORTION
 23 ... MODE CONTROLLER
 2 ... MONITOR
 6A ... OPERATION AREA
 15 6B ... PANORAMA OPERATION AREA
 6E ... PANORAMA GENERATION
 1 ... COMPUTER
 31 ... CONTROL B
 9 ... SERVER
 20 131 ... CONTROL A
 129 ... VIDEO CAPTURE
 130 ... STORING
 14 ... POINTING DEVICE
 25 FIG. 23
 3 ... PAN TILTER CAMERA
 9 ... SERVER

【書類名】 図面

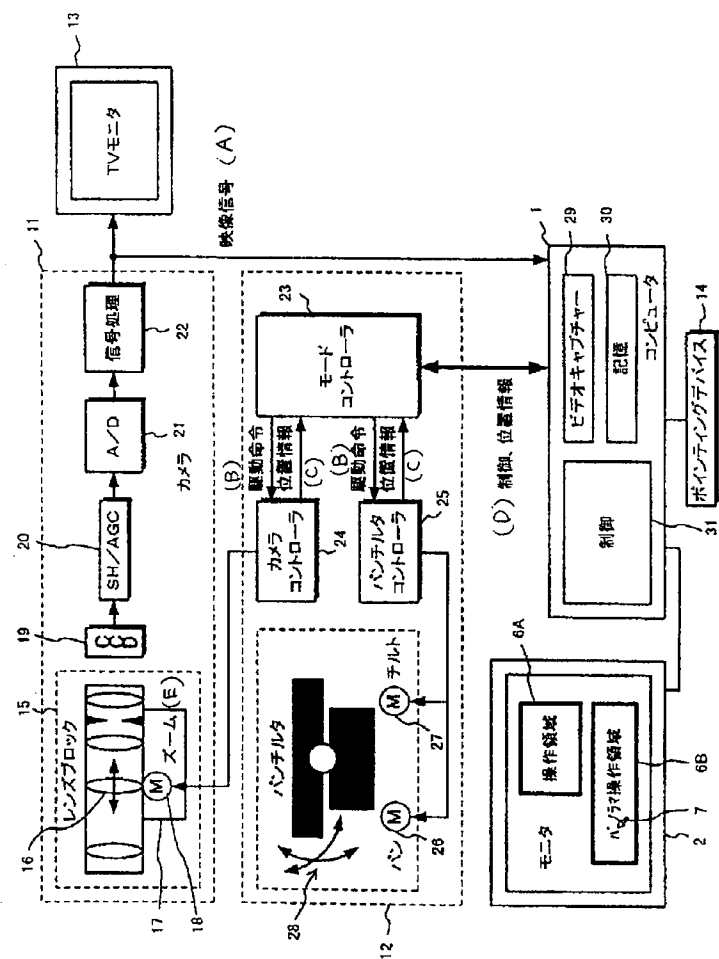
【図1】



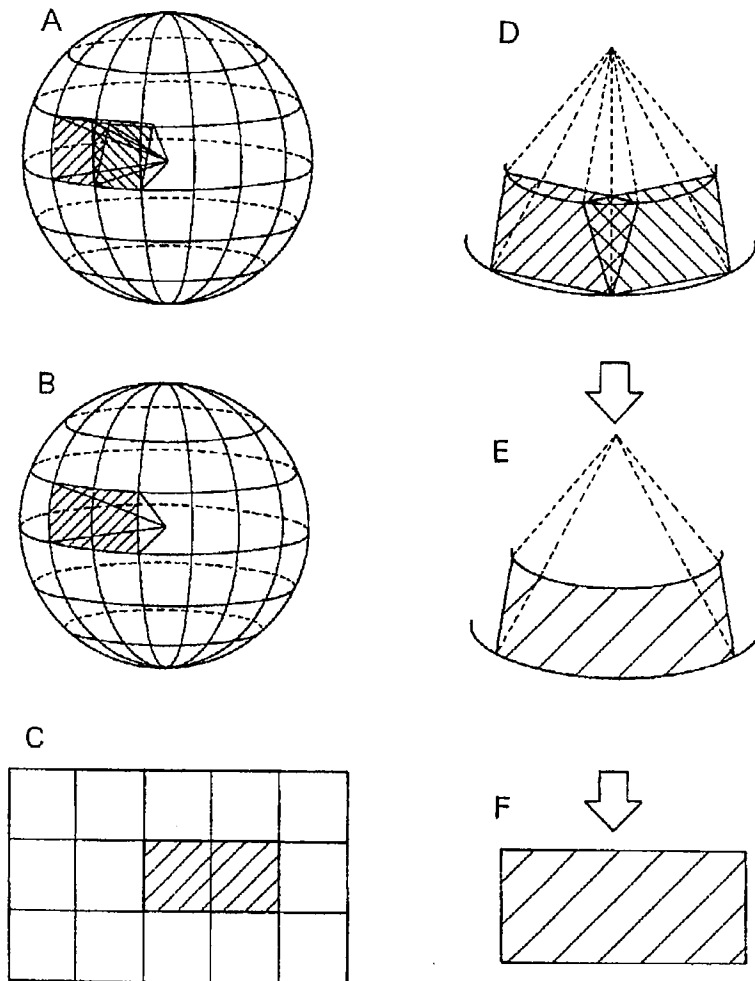
【図 2】



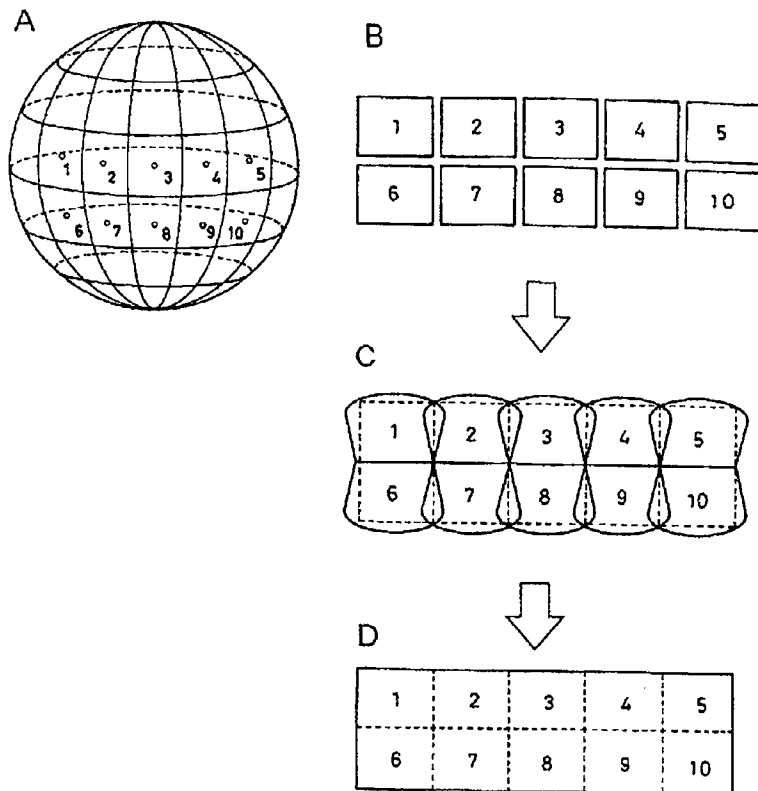
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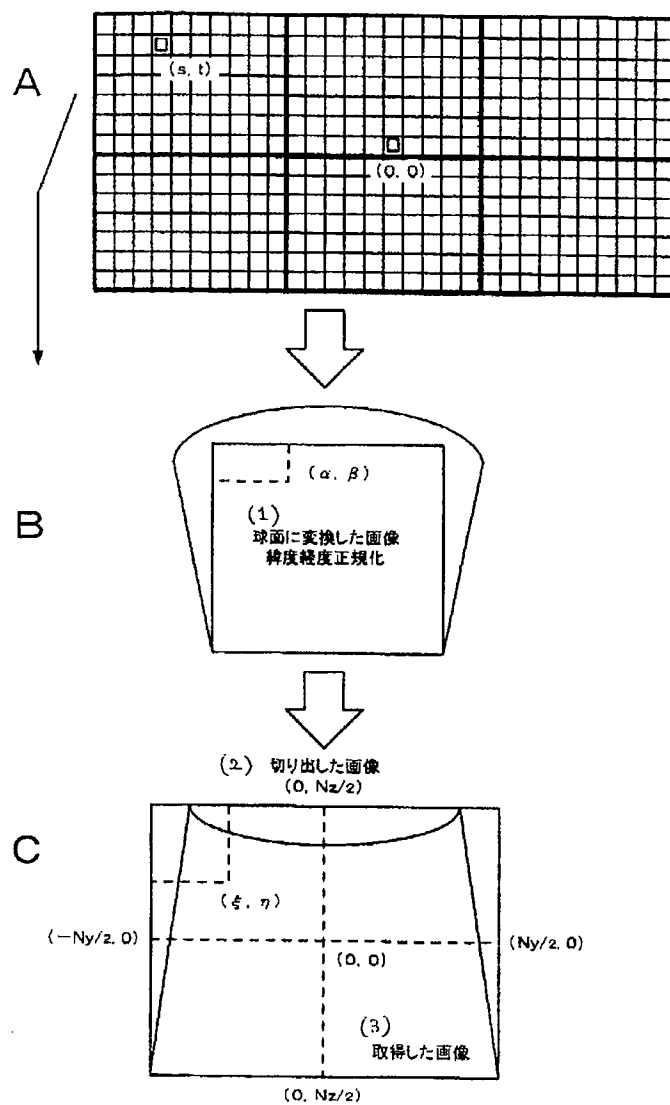
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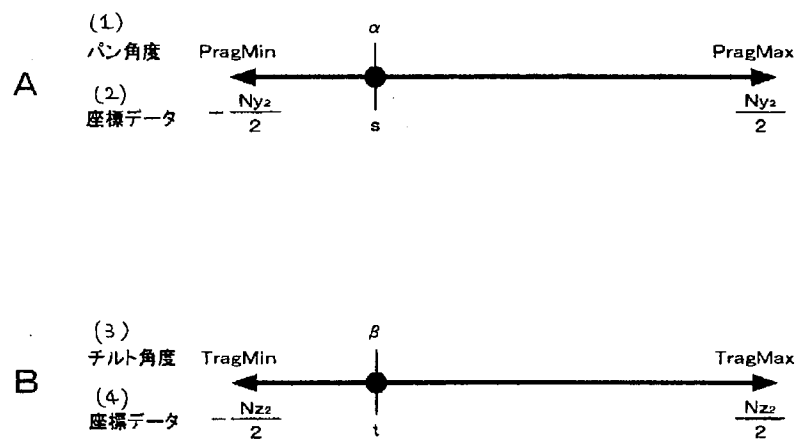
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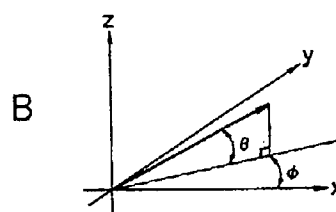
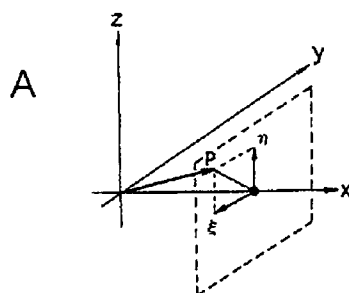
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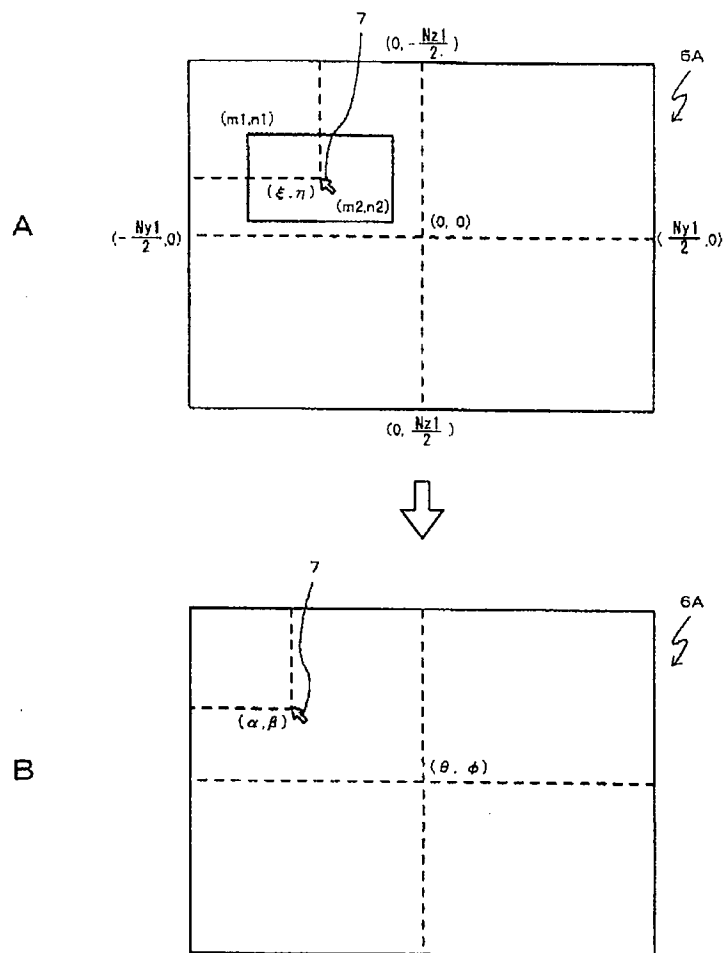
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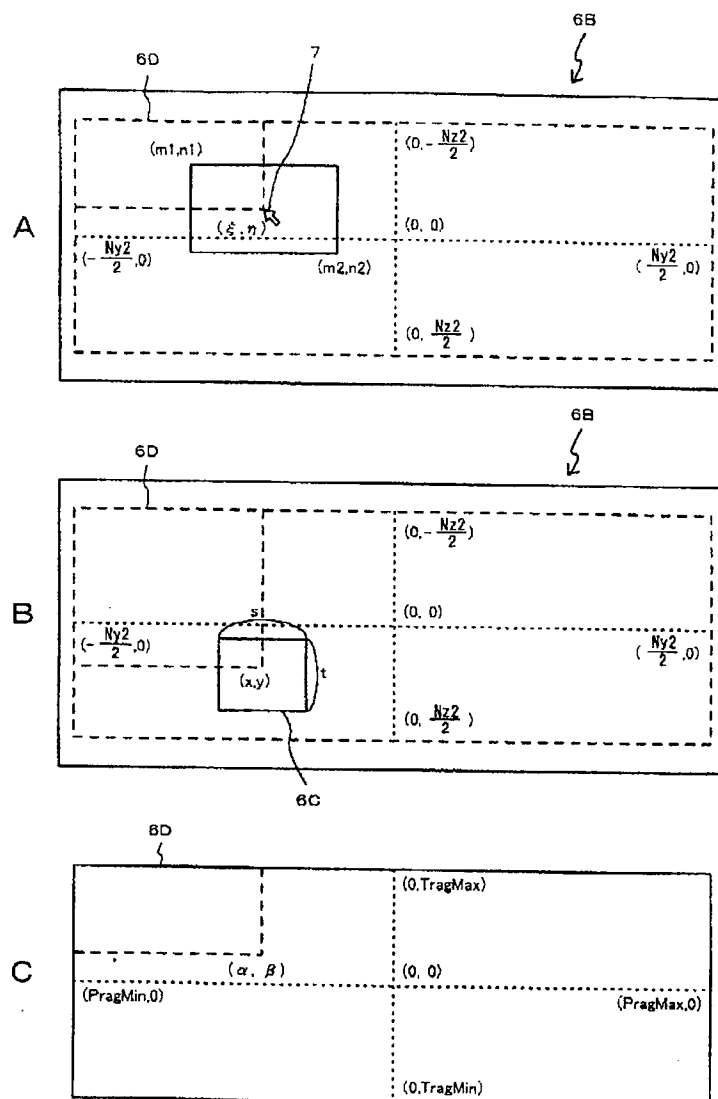
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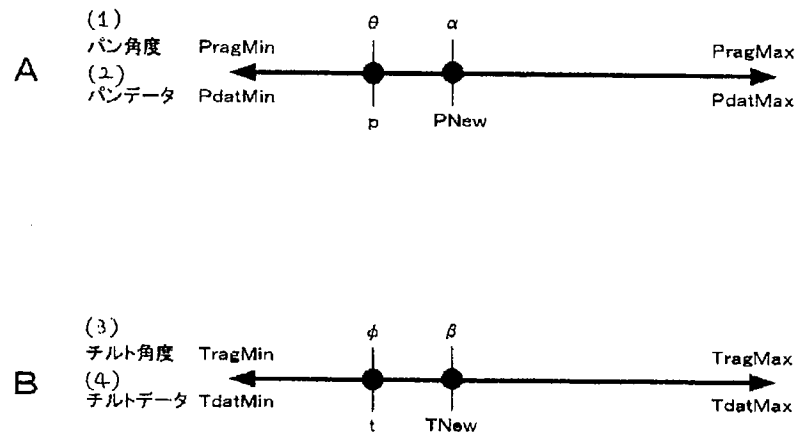
【 図 9 】



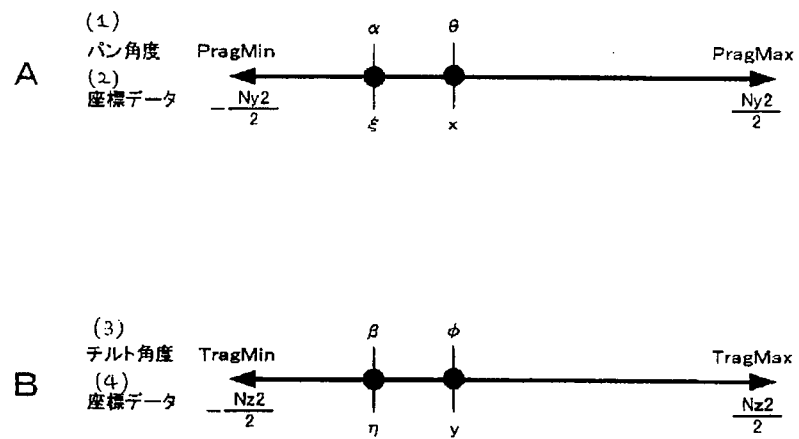
【図10】



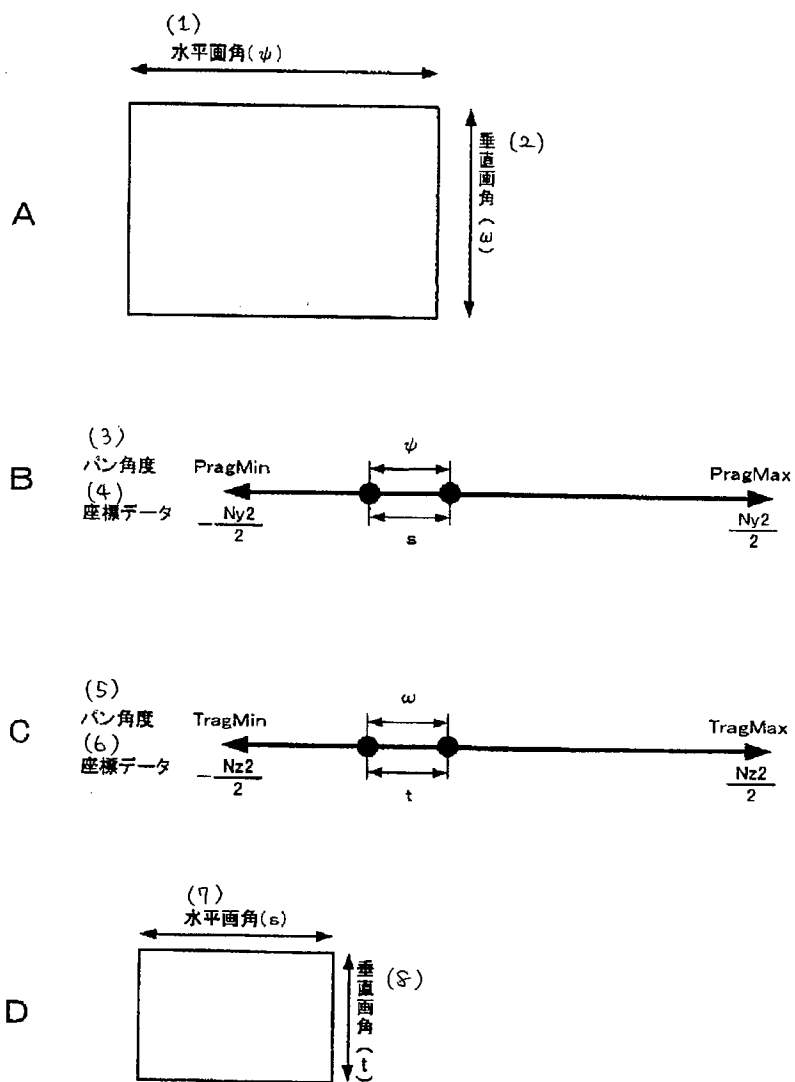
【 図 1 1 】



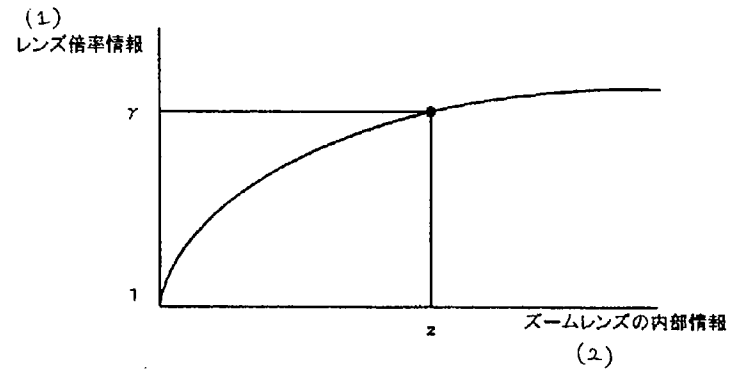
【 図 1 2 】



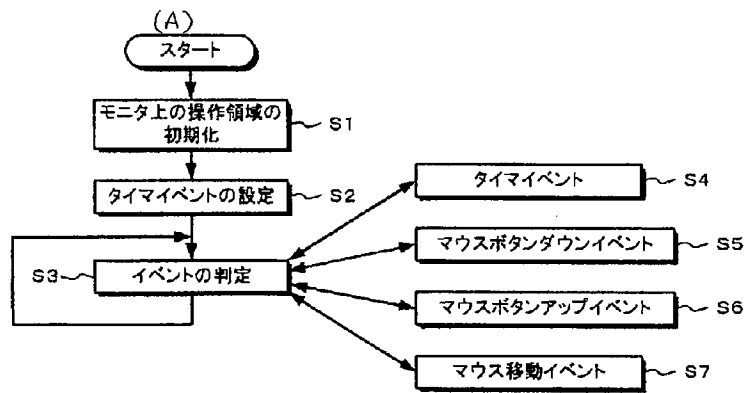
【図 1 3】



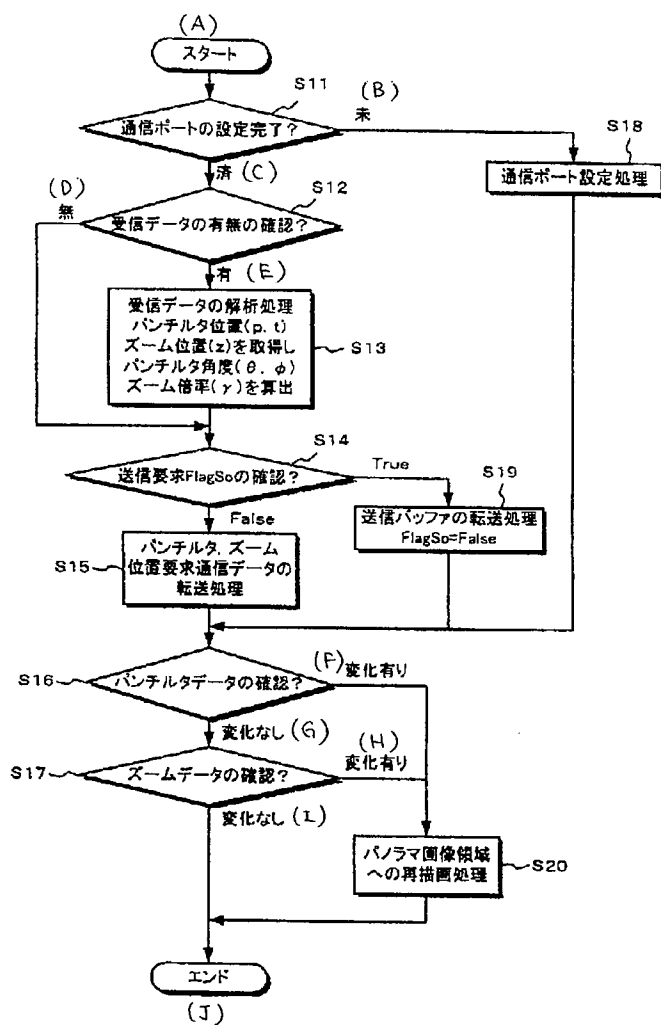
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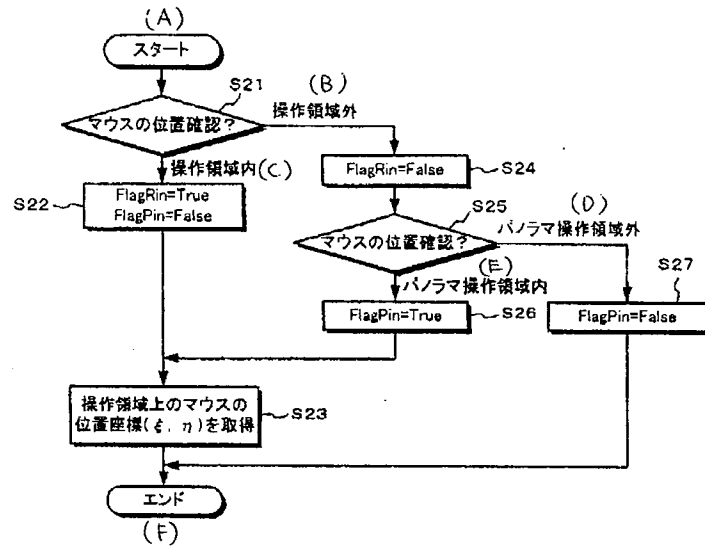
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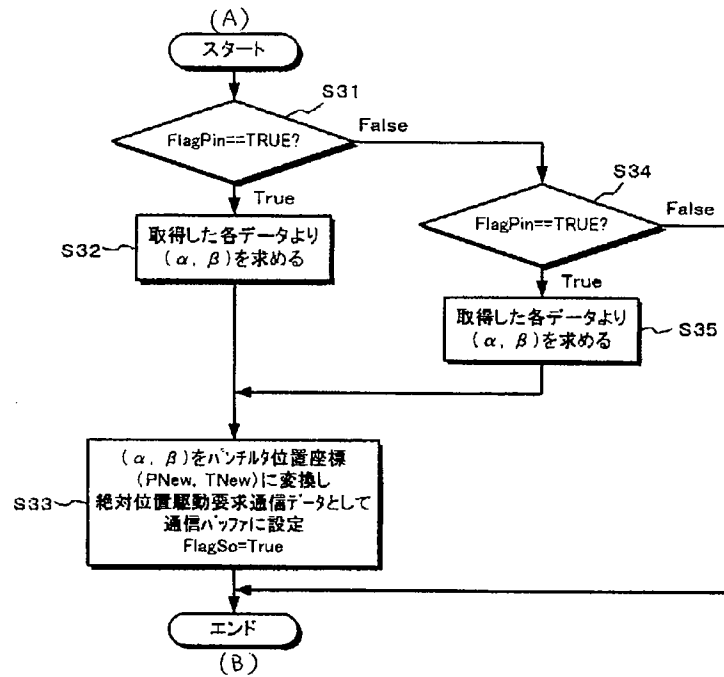
【図 16】



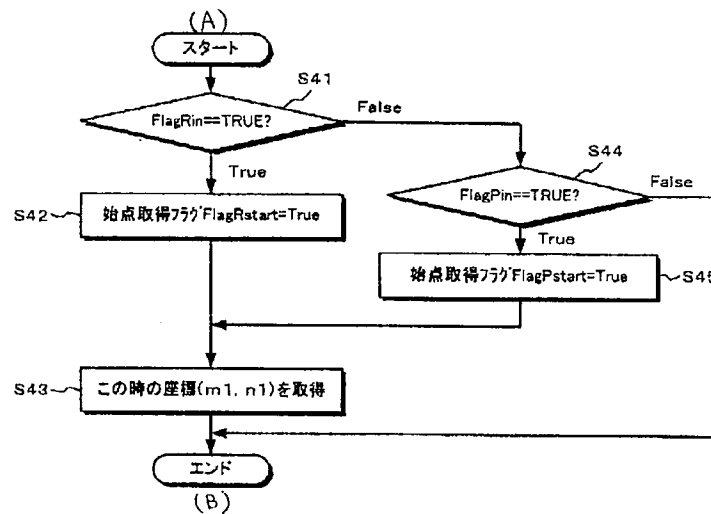
【図 17】



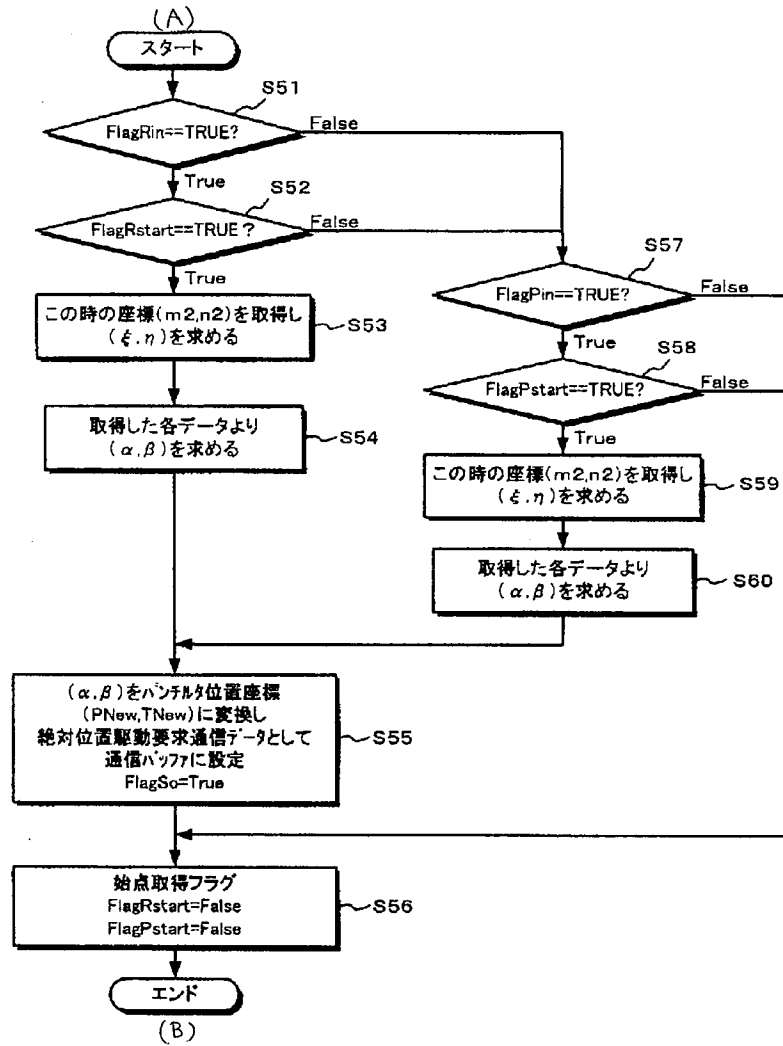
【 図 1 8 】



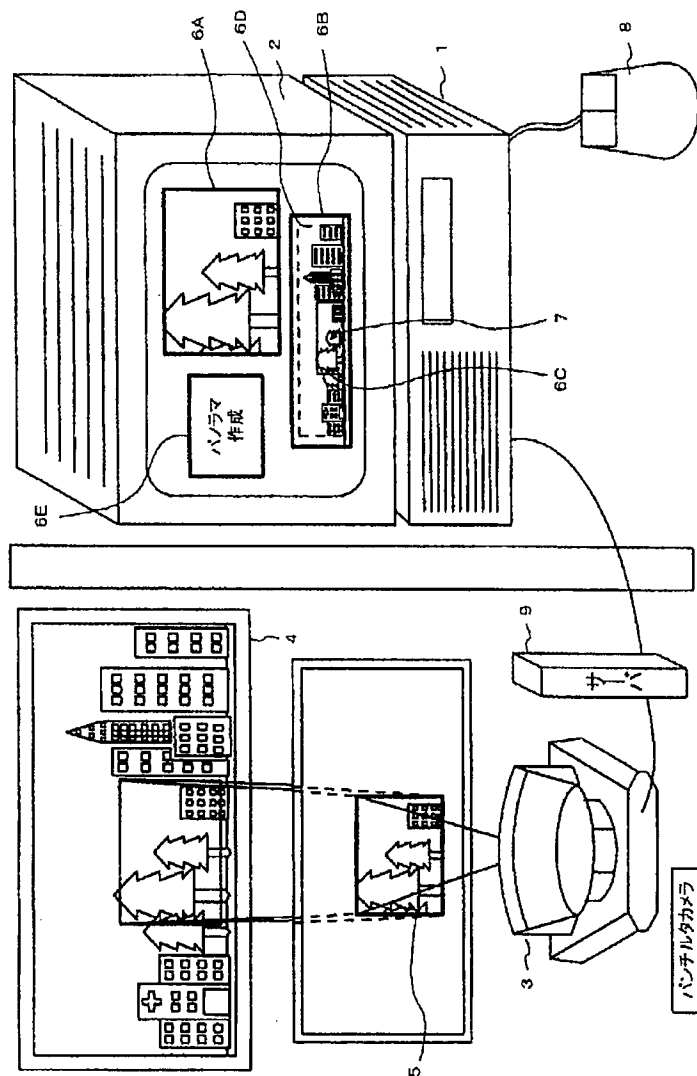
【 図 1 9 】



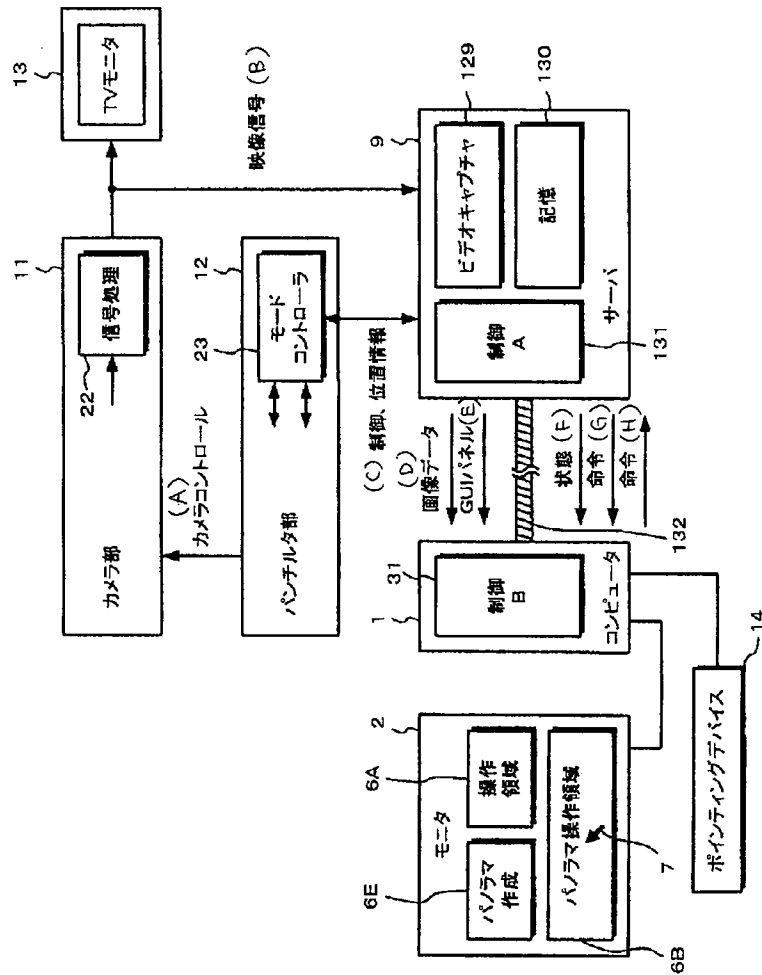
【 図 2 0 】



【 図 2 1 】



【図 22】



【 図 2 3 】

